TUTTLE MARTIAL ARTS

Master Alfred Huang

Tai-chi

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The Definitive Guide to Physical and Emotional Self-Improvement

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COMPLETE Tai-chi

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL SELF-IMPROVEMENT

MASTER ALFRED HUANG

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The two Chinese characters on the preceding page can be translated as "the Tao of Heaven." The first character, *tien*, means heaven, and the second character, *tao*, means the way.

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Dedicated

to those
who are searching for
a new way to enlightment and spiritual growth
in this New Age of Consciousness

and to those
who are becoming more aware
of their own responsibility for health
and unity of body, mind, and spirit

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments 11

Introduction 13

Part I : How to Learn and Practice Tai-chi

1. Understanding the Structural Framework of the Body 19

The Spine 22
The Head 23
The Rib Cage 24
The Pelvic Girdle 24
The Shoulder Girdle 27

2. Understanding the Primary Powers of the Universe 30

Attune the Body 33
Attune the Breath 36
Attune the Mind 39

Part II : The History of the Origin and Development of Tai-chi

3. Exploring Legend and Confusion 45

4. A Historical Overview of the Most Important Contributors 51

Chen Wang-ting and the Chen Family Martial Arts 51
Contributions of Wang Tsung-yu 54
Contributions of Yang Lu-chan and Wu Yu-hsiang 56
Contributions of Li Yi-yu 60
Hao Wei-ching and Sung Lu-tang 61

5. The Development of Tai-chi—New Styles Emerge 63

Evolution of the Chen Family Style 63
The New Form 63
The Circular Form 64
The Old Form Survives 64
Birth of the Yang Style 65
Yang's Descendants Carry On 66
Yang Cheng-fu Develops the Modern Yang Style 68
Wu Chien-chuan Continues the Evolution of Tai-chi 68

6. Development and Current Styles 72

The Art of Push Hands 74

Part III : The Condensed Form of Wu-style Tai-chi

7. Unique Features 79

Origins of the Style 79
Healing Power 81
Focus Is on Internal Energy 82
Compact, Brisk Movements 83
Movements with Edges and Corners 84
Body Is Kept in a Straight Line 85
Central Equilibrium Is Maintained 86
Source of Movement Is in Pelvis 86
Movements End Where They Begin 88
Spiritual Aspect Is Accentuated 89
Postures Possess Flesh and Bone 90

8. How to Practice Tai-chi 92

Standing in Stillness and Balance 92
Lift Spirit, Meditate with Heart 93
Key to the Directions 98

The 36 Postures of the Condensed Form of Wu-style Tai-chi

SECTION ONE

POSTURE 1: Grasping Sparrow's Tail 102
POSTURE 2: Single Whip 113
POSTURE 3: Slant Flying 115
POSTURE 4: Raise Hands, Step Forward 116
POSTURE 5: White Crane Spreads Wings 119
POSTURE 6: Brush Knee,Twist Step 121
POSTURE 7: Hands Pluck Pipa 128
POSTURE 8: Step Forward and Intercept, Punch 130
POSTURE 9: Seal and Close 135
POSTURE 10: Embrace Tiger, Push Mountain 137
POSTURE 11: Fist Under Elbow 138
POSTURE 12: Backward Repulse Monkey 141
POSTURE 13: Pick Needle at Bottom of Sea 144
POSTURE 14: Fan Through Back 147
POSTURE 15: Cloud Hands 151
—Single Whip— 156

SECTION TWO

POSTURE 16: High Pat on Horse 158
POSTURE 17: Right, Left Separate Foot 159
POSTURE 18: Turn Around, Kick 167
POSTURE 19: Trample and Punch 169
POSTURE 20: Turn Around, Raise Foot Twice 173
POSTURE 21: Retreat, Step on Tiger 180
POSTURE 22: Strike Ears with Fists 185
POSTURE 23: Turn Body, Kick with Toes, Kick with Heel 188
POSTURE 24: Wild Horse Splits Mane 192
POSTURE 25: Jade Lady Works at Shuttle 198
—Single Whip— 219

SECTION THREE

POSTURE 26: Move Downward 221
POSTURE 27: Rooster Stands on One Leg 224
POSTURE 28: Hit Face with Palm 226
POSTURE 29: Turn Around Cross Hands, Sweep Lotus 227
POSTURE 30: Step Forward, Punch at Groin 230
POSTURE 31: Turn Around Seven Stars 232
POSTURE 32: Step Backward and Ride Tiger 234
POSTURE 33: Turn Around and Hit Face with Both Palms 235
POSTURE 34: Turn Feet, Sweep Lotus 236
POSTURE 35: Bend Bow to Shoot Tiger 239
POSTURE 36: Turn Body, Single Whip 241

Part IV: Eight Classic Works for Guiding Practice of Tai-chi

1. Tai-chi Chuan Treatise 252
2. The Thirteen Positions 255
3. Chant of Tai-chi Chuan Joint Hands 256
4. Chant of the Thirteen Positions 257
5. Essentials of Push Hands 260
6. A Discourse on How to Practice Tai-chi Chuan 270
7. Six Key Elements of Practicing Tai-chi Chuan 274
8. Summary Ballad of the First Classic 278

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SINCE 1958 when I recorded my Tai-chi master's profound experiences, I have longed to create a book that could truly help readers to learn Tai-chi and enjoy its benefits. Through the help of students and friends such as Jody McNeff, Karen Rossie, William Rehm, and Kathy Fill, all of whom worked seriously and patiently with me when I was writing this book, I have been able to realize my long-cherished dream. After I moved from Pittsburgh to Hawaii, Gale Free came to my class. She enthusiastically helped me with the final revision of my manuscript. Through her sincere love I experienced the harmony of yin and yang, the dance of the souls, and the tao of Tai-chi. I express my hearty gratitude to Yojana, my student and good friend, who proofed the final revision, and to my photographic artist, Mr. Blaine Michioka, who was always serious and patient as he took over three-hundred pictures for this book. Before taking pictures, he attended several of my classes to watch the spirit of Tai-chi. I would also like to thank the staff of the Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Company, who put much time, energy, and enthusiasm into working on my book.

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I express thanks to all my students and good friends who contributed their energy and love to the preparation of this book.

Introduction

ORIGINALLY, the art of Tai-chi Chuan, (literally translated, "The Ultimate Extremity Fist,") was practiced solely for its usefulness in combat and self-defense. There were three distinct components of the art to be learned—the postures, Push Hands (the "martial" art of Tai-chi), and weapon fighting. The postures themselves were much more strenuous than those practiced currently.

Although there is really only one Tai-chi (in this text, I have shortened Tai-chi Chuan to Tai-chi in order to make it more readable), today there are several major styles. The essential idea of Tai-chi as a martial art is to avoid the use of muscular force (which the Chinese call *li*, "clumsy force" or "awkward strength"), and instead to use a type of intrinsic force, a psychic energy called *chi*. In application, attacking is contained in yielding through the technique of borrowing the momentum of the opponent's force and changing its direction. One of the classics (a series of treatises written by various Tai-chi masters) tells us, "Use four ounces to deflect a thousand pounds." Additional principles of combat include inducing the opponent to advance and making him fall empty; using lightness to overcome heaviness; and avoiding substantiality while following insubstantiality.

All of these techniques require the relaxation of the large outer muscles and the use of the smaller inner, or structural muscles. Also necessary is flexibility of the joints, straightness of the lumbar, calmness of the mind, sensitivity of feeling, the use of deep, smooth diaphragm breathing, and proper balance of the body in every movement. If you practice Tai-chi properly, using the right part of the mind to direct the proper joint and the right muscle for each movement, coordinating your breathing and cultivating your intrinsic energy *(chi),* intrinsic strength *(jing),* and intrinsic spirit *(shen),* the benefits will include self-healing, rejuvenation, longevity, spirituality, and spiritual growth. You will have naturally achieved a condition of health, fitness, stamina, and vitality—a kind of total self-defense in a figurative sense. Nor do the benefits stop there. If your practice includes all of these aspects, and you practice long enough and frequently enough to form a habit, the right movement will come out as a reflex of the feeling. You will have naturally obtained the actual self-defense techniques. The postures and movements of Tai-chi are designed through intuitive experience, in accordance with body structure and body mechanics, and have as their basis the optimal posture and coordination of the whole body. Executing these movements requires the whole person—body, mind, and spirit.

In *Complete Tai-chi,* I try to merge ancient Chinese experience and wisdom with modern Western scientific methodology. I apply a knowledge of body structure, the laws of body mechanics, and the laws of mechanical advantage to explain the experience and wisdom embodied in the classic works of Tai-chi and teach my Condensed Form of the 36 postures of Wu-style Tai-chi.

As more and more people are moving into a new consciousness, Tai-chi has become part of the New Age Movement. People are becoming more aware of their own responsibility for the health and unity of their bodies, their minds, and their spirits. With these factors in mind, I have felt a growing responsibility to introduce the intact essence of Tai-chi to the Western

world, and to share the knowledge and experience I inherited from my master with those who are interested in the art of Tai-chi. I hope this book will bring a new perspective of Tai-chi to the Western world in this new age of consciousness, and attract more people to the healing power and spiritual aspects of Tai-chi. I anticipate that this book will help people to appreciate the history, understand the theory, learn the form, and enjoy the movements of Tai-chi.

Although I have studied and practiced Tai-chi for over fifty years, and revised the text of Complete Tai-chi many times, I realize that it can never be perfect, because there is always room for my understanding of the depth of this profound art to grow. Therefore, today's perfection might become tomorrow's imperfection.

Each day before I worked on this book, I spent time meditating. When I was writing the history section, I could feel energy coming down from the originators of the different styles of Tai-chi as well as the Chen, Yang, and Wu families and the grand masters. When writing the how-to section, I envisioned my master performing the postures. Sometimes, after I had used Western scientific methodology to interpret the experiences of the grand masters, I felt that this was not my work; that I was simply a tool for for putting everything down on paper. Any inaccuracies that remain can be attributed to my own imperfections and limitations. Otherwise, this book would be as perfect as a seamless heavenly robe.

PART

I

How to Learn and Practice Tai-chi

CHAPTER

1

Understanding the Structural Framework of the Body

TAI-CHI is one of the cultural pillars of China. It is based on the ancient philosophy of living in harmony with nature. We are upright beings who spend almost two-thirds of our life in the upright postures of standing, sitting, and walking. When we are standing or moving, the weight of our body rests on a surface the length of which is less than one-sixth the height of the body. In practicing Tai-chi, we usually put our weight on one foot. At first, this may seem quite unstable. If our body is in proper alignment with gravity, it uses gravity to hold it up. The body is actually kept stable by gravity's constant downward pull, and if part of the body is off-center, we are forced to expend considerable energy holding it up and keeping it balanced.

If our body is in alignment with gravity, and our movements are in alignment with body mechanics, we are in harmony with nature. Most of us start out with a proportional body, one that is erect, slim, well-aligned, and easy to move. By the age of thirty-five, many of us develop rounded shoulders, broad hips, and a protruding abdomen. When we become elderly, we sometimes appear to be pear-shaped. One of the reasons is that years of gravitational pull and postural misalignment have changed our body proportions. Misalignment of posture affects not only the

body, but also the inner organs and the emotions of the individual.

To the Chinese, humans are unitary beings. A person's body, its structure and posture; the way he moves, what he thinks, what he cares about; his personality, his perspective on life, and his relationships with people; these are all part of a whole, and constitute his "core." To the Chinese, the core comprises the unity of body, mind, and spirit. All of these aspects are interrelated, and one cannot be changed without influencing the other. This holistic view of "being" has been rooted in Chinese culture for thousands of years.

Since the Chinese are interested in all-natural, holistic methods of prevention and healing, they believe that in changing their physical aspect through proper exercise, they simultaneously change the psychological and emotional aspects of their being. This is why Tai-chi is so popular in China. The Chinese regard Tai-chi as a therapeutic treatment. It is the Fountain of Youth, Path to Total Health, and Way Toward Abundant Life.

Our postures and movements have been learned, either by trial and error or by imitation. Once they have been learned, their performance becomes automatic, but not always effective. Beneficial movement should not only be effective, it should also conserve energy. Expending a minimal amount of energy to do work should become natural. Unfortunately, not all exercise can provide beneficial movement. This is the reason that our potential for movement is rarely developed to its fullest. Tai-chi is one of the few exercises that provides an education in movement emphasizing effectiveness, efficiency, and endurance. When we are practicing Tai-chi, we use mind rather than strength, and energy rather than force to move the body. The whole system of Tai-chi uses images of movement to achieve good body alignment and efficient body mechanics. This is accomplished by imitating the movements of birds and animals, and imagining how alive, graceful, energetic, and light their movements are. All these

movements show that they are performed with minimum effort and achieve maximum results. If their movements were not developed to the highest potential, how could they survive in the natural environment?

Movement is a neuro-musculo-skeletal activity. In practicing Tai-chi, we establish a clear concept or mental picture of movement in our minds, and leave the central nervous system free to mobilize the most efficient neuro-musculo-skeletal coordination. The sequence of movement should be performed slowly, gently, and gracefully, with sharp consciousness of body alignment, functional movement, and coordination of movement with breathing. Emphasis is placed on inner awareness. At the same time, we let our central nervous system be free to feel the equilibrium and the balance of the body, and to direct movement and posture.The whole process of practicing Tai-chi involves reconnecting the mind to the body, the conscience to the subconscious, and the individual to nature or the universe. In such a body, every joint is flexible, every muscle is free of tension, every movement is natural and graceful, and every inner organ is held in the right place and functions well.

In learning to practice Tai-chi, you must first learn to affect the postures properly. Postures are elements of movement. It is only when one is able to affect the postures properly that one is able to perform the movements correctly. Posture, in Chinese, is called "framework." It is the framework of movement. In Mandarin, or standard spoken Chinese, practicing Tai-chi is called "posing the framework." Because posing the framework has been regarded as the fundamental achievement of Tai-chi, one must learn to stand in different positions, attaining and maintaining equilibrium and balance in various postures before learning the innumerable movements in sequence. In this book I am following the old tradition of training the apprentice by laying a solid foundation for further achievement.

When looked at from a mechanical point of view,

the human body is a living machine. Therefore, the study of posture is primarily an engineering study. Any attempt to teach postures while only taking external form into account and neglecting biological and mechanical principles can hardly be successful. In the classics, the grand masters did not explain their experiences in scientific terms, but through long years of practicing and pondering, their experiences were in accord with the design of the human skeletal framework, the mechanical principles of balance, and the laws of mechanical advantage. Once they had experienced using minimum effort to obtain maximum achievement in Push Hands or martial combat, they knew that their postures and movements were correct. Now that numerous scientific studies of movement have been performed in the Western world, the grand masters' experiences can be explained in a more scientific manner.

Before we learn the proper methods of performing the postures of Tai-chi, we must understand the structural framework of our body. There are three major structural units in our skeletal structure. These are the head, the rib cage, and the pelvis. They are all joined together by the spinal column, and ideally should be in direct alignment with the line of gravity.

The Spine

The spine is the supporting post of the trunk of the body. It plays an important part in the alignment of the body. The spine of an adult contains twenty-six movable vertebrae. It is a sturdy but flexible column that encloses and protects the spinal cord, joins the head, rib cage, and pelvis, and serves as a point of attachment for the ribs and muscles of the back. The primary function of the spine is to support weight; its secondary function is movement. It moves anteriorly, posteriorly, and laterally.

When viewed from the side, there are four curves to the spine: the cervical curve, the thoracic curve, the lumbar curve, and the sacral curve. The first seven cervical vertebrae (cervis=neck) curve forward, forming the cervical curve. The next twelve thoracic

vertebrae, (thorax=chest) curve backward, retaining their original curve present at birth and forming the thoracic curve. The five lumbar vertebrae (lumbus=loin) curve forward again, forming a lumbar curve which supports the lower back. The sacrum, five sacral vertebrae fused into one bone, forms the back of the pelvis and retains its original backward curve. The coccyx, four coccygeal vertebrae fused into one, retains its backward curve, and together with the sacrum forms the sacral curve. These four curves of the spine are important. They increase the strength of the spine, help maintain the balance of the trunk in the upright position, absorb shock from the movements of the lower extremities, and protect the column from fracture.

Because the spine plays a unique role in supporting weight and helping maintain the structural balance of the body in an upright position, it is extremely important to poise the spine properly. There are four curves to the spine. Therefore, almost all the vertebrae are more or less slanted. In accordance with the nature of the spine, it should be upright and erect, but never straight. Any attempt to make the vertebrae level or to keep the spine straight will make it rigid, and seriously affect the balance of the body. How do we poise a well-balanced spine? The grand masters' experiences pointed out that the head should be lifted as if it were suspended from above by a piece of thread. In doing so, the spine will be erect but not straight, flexible but not rigid. It will be in natural accord with the line of gravity, thus keeping the spine and the body well-balanced.

The Head

The head is the uppermost structure of the body. It does not support body weight, but because the spine supports the head, the balance of the head does effect the balance of the lower structure. Ideally, the head should be erect and upright. Then it will be in alignment with the whole body. Unfortunately, many people hold their heads forward. This misalignment makes the whole body readjust itself to the gravita-

tional force, and causes tension in the muscles of the shoulders and the back which are used to balance the head. The grand masters always placed strong emphasis on the position of the head, stressing that the head should be lifted as if it were suspended from above. Grand Master Wu Chien-chuan said, "The head is the center of operation for the whole body. Only when the head is straight and upright can one's spirit be stirred. But, in holding the head straight and upright, it should be held by unforced spirit." If the head is held in this manner, the neck will not be stiff and stop the blood from circulating smoothly and *chi* from flowing freely.

The Rib Cage

The rib cage consists of thirty-seven bones. They are joined in approximately one-hundred places. The twenty-four ribs and the breast bone form a circular cage, which is actually a hanging structure. The twelve thoracic vertebrae curve slightly to the back and support most of the weight of the ribs. Besides being connected directly to the thoracic vertebrae, the rib cage is supported by muscles which connect it to the thoracic spine and to the cervical spine. Additionally, muscles connect the ribs to each other. To conform to the principle of mechanical balance, the rib cage should be hanging downward naturally, as close to the spine as the structure allows. Because the rib cage has many movable joints, it should ideally be able to move freely during respiration. But the rib cages of many people are not as movable as they should be. This loss of mobility stems from the mistaken idea that the chest must be held up for good posture. As a result, the muscles constantly holding the chest up become tighter and less elastic, which causes breathing to be shallow and fast.

The Pelvic Girdle

The pelvis is the base of the trunk. It is the area where all the weight of the upper structure rests, and is the location of the body's center of gravity. It is the center of structural balance and also the center for

control of movement. For this reason, it is very important for the student of Tai-chi to know the structure of the pelvis, its function, and the nature of its movement.

To conform to the principles of mechanical balance of the whole body, nature has equipped the pelvis with three large, heavy, thickened bones. These three bones are strongly bound together by nineteen ligaments that form a bowl-like structure. In comparison to the shoulder girdle, this bowl-like pelvic girdle moves as a single unit. Unlike the shoulder girdle, it is impossible for the pelvis to have movement on one side independent of the other side. This kind of design is appropriate for the support and transfer of weight as well as for balance and movement. It allows the pelvis to be strong without weighing a lot, and its resilience provides shock absorption during movement.

When we are standing and moving, the place of contact of the pelvis with the lower limbs is at the femoral socket on the rounded heads of the femurs (thigh bones). The pelvis not only supports the weight of the upper structures, but also transmits the weight to the lower limbs. Because the supporting surfaces of the femoral heads are rounded, they provide greater mobility and stability, determining all the movements of pelvic rotation.

The pelvis can rotate on both femoral heads only when we are bending forward and backward. Because the pelvic girdle moves as a single unit, rotation to the right and left solely on the horizontal plane is possible only if the rotation takes place on one femoral joint (hip joint). Movement of the pelvis always coordinates with movement of the lower limbs. Sometimes this movement maintains the line of gravity through the supporting limb; very often it increases the range of movement of a limb.

After we have understood the structure and the function of the pelvis, we can take a step further to discuss the saying from the classics, "Motion is governed at the waist."

Grand Master Yang Cheng-fu, in *The Ten Essentials*

of Practicing Tai-chi Chuan, states, "The waist is the governor of your whole body. Only when one can loosen and relax the waist can he then keep his feet strong, and make his lower body firm and stable. Both substantial and insubstantial change are controlled by the waist. This is why it is said, 'The source of intention is in the waist.'" Grand Master Wu Chien-chuan, in his *Six Key Elements of Practicing Tai-chi Chuan,* writes, "Relax the waist; make it light and loose. All the turning and moving of Tai-chi is related to the waist. That is why it is said, 'The source of intention is in the waist.' When the waist is relaxed and unfolding, it not only allows the *chi* to sink downward more easily, making turning and moving swift and agile, but it also makes the lower part become stronger and more solid. Avoid the problem of being heavy on the upper part and light on the lower part."

According to the biological and mechanical principles of body structure, motion should be governed by the pelvis. Because the center of gravity in our body lies within the pelvis, the pelvis becomes the center for structural balance and control of movement. Unfortunately, pelvis is not a common word in Chinese daily spoken language. Sometimes my master would tell me to "relax and unfold the groin." If we put the words pelvis and hip joints (instead of waist) into the above quotes, the statements make more sense:

> The pelvis is the governor of one's whole body. Only when one can loosen and relax the pelvis at the hip joints can he then keep his feet strong, and make his lower body firm and stable. Both substantial and insubstantial change are controlled by the pelvis and the hip joints.
>
> Relax the pelvis at the hip joints; make it light and loose. All the turning and moving of Tai-chi is related to the pelvis and hip joints. When the pelvis and the hip joints are relaxed and unfolding, it not only allows the *chi* to sink downward more easily, making turning and moving swift and agile, it also

makes the lower part become stronger and more solid. Avoid the problem of being heavy on the upper part and light on the lower part.

If we agree that the source of intention is in the pelvis, we can fully understand the importance and significance of the advice, "Sink the *chi* to the *tan-tien*." In Taoist meditation, *tan-tien* is a point or a tiny field located the width of four fingers below the navel, in the center of the pelvic girdle. It is an acupuncture point called Sea of Energy. In the Chinese system of meditation (Chi-kung) or Tai-chi (Chi-kung with movement), we always focus our attention on this point and restore our energy in this field. Although for thousands of years we have been told to "sink the *chi* to the *tan-tien*," we have never been told that this area is the center of gravity of the whole body. Sinking the *chi* to the *tan-tien* will help the lower part of the body become more solid and stable. Otherwise, if the *chi* becomes fixed in the upper body, the result will be as one of the classics says: "You will become heavy on top and light below, and your heel will float easily."

Another classic says, "One can frequently see many who have spent years on painstaking practice and are still unable to neutralize an attacking force. They are always controlled by their opponents. This is simply because they have not fully comprehended the fault of double-weightedness." In other words, this is because they still have not understood the structure, the function, and the nature of the movement of the pelvic girdle. To avoid this lack of understanding, you must distinguish between yin and yang. To do so, you must learn how to put your weight on just one leg, rotating the pelvic girdle and your whole body as a single unit by rotating on only one hip joint.

The Shoulder Girdle

The shoulder girdle is a hanging structure that lies horizontally across the rib cage. Its bony attachment is on the front of the trunk. It is supported by the breast bone and the first rib circle in front, and by muscles attached to the higher levels of the skeletal

structure. On each side of the back, there are two shoulder blades. Their only attachment to the trunk is through muscle. This kind of design gives the shoulder girdle much more freedom and range of movement than the pelvis.

Because the shoulder girdle is a hanging structure, it must hang free under any circumstance in which the body is in an upright position. If the body is in alignment with gravity, the shoulder girdle, as well as the arms, will naturally hang free to allow a full range of movement. Holding the shoulder girdle in any particular position will increase the tension of the muscles related to it, restricting movement and reducing its flexibility. Very often, it will lead to a forward positioning of the head. If the shoulder girdle is not flexible, it will interfere with the flexibility of the spine and the freedom of movement of the ribs.

The area that joins the upper arm with the shoulder girdle is a ball-and-socket joint which permits the movement of the upper arm in all directions. Because the shoulder girdle is movable, it participates in the movement of the arm, either initiating movement or increasing the range of movement. On either side of the shoulder girdle, there are seven muscles which control position and movement. The shoulder girdle is like the handle of a sword, with the fingers serving as the point. These seven muscles of the shoulder girdle have their origins in the spine, the head, and the ribs. Therefore the position and alignment of the spine, the head, and the ribs will influence the effectiveness and efficiency of arm movement.

In the classics, the grand masters did not mention that the shoulder girdle is a hanging structure, yet they repeatedly instructed the learner to "Sink the shoulder and drop the elbows." Grand Master Wu Chien-chuan indicated that "If the shoulders are not sunk, the body from the chest up is restrained, and the *chi* will flow upward. If the elbows are not dropped, then strength cannot be magnified, and both sides of the chest will lose their protection." It is

easy to realize that sinking the shoulders allows the shoulder girdle to hang free. As mentioned above, holding the shoulder girdle increases the tension of the muscles, and the grand masters knew that it also restrained movement of the body from the chest up.

Why should the elbows drop? In the standing position, if both the upper arm and the lower arm hang free, it is not necessary to drop the elbow. When practicing Tai-chi, however, the elbows should usually be bent. If the elbow is bent, no matter which direction the forearm is—horizontal, vertical, or slanting—the elbow should be dropped. If the elbow is not dropped, it will affect the shoulder girdle's ability to hang free. Of course, bending and dropping the elbow protects the chest from attack. In the Condensed Form I introduce in Part III, when the elbow is bent and the forearm is in a vertical position, the wrist is always level with the shoulder joint. If the wrist is level with the shoulder joint, the upper arm, the lower arm, and the space between the shoulder joint and the wrist will naturally form an equilateral triangle. If we hold this equilateral triangle as a fixed framework, then the *jing* (intrinsic strength), will function easily at the wrist or hand. If the forearm is bending in other directions, we still hold the arm as a fixed part of the framework. This action is based upon the theory of Tai-chi that says, "Seek straightness from the curved." If the elbow is not bent and dropped, then strength cannot be magnified. Only when our postures are posed as frameworks which are in accordance with body mechanics and the laws of mechanical advantage can we follow this advice from one of the classics: "Your whole body's *jing* should be worked on until it becomes unified. And it should also be discharged from the source. It is initiated from the heel, governed at the waist, manifested in the fingers, and discharged from the spine."

CHAPTER

2

Understanding the Primary Powers of the Universe

BEFORE attuning the body, the breath, and the mind, it is better to understand some of the philosophy and principles of Tai-chi practice.

The term "Tai-chi" first appeared in the *I Ching,* or *The Book of Change,* as most Westerners know it. The appendix of the *I Ching* says:

> In *I*
> there is Tai-chi.
> Tai-chi
> generates Two Extremities.
>
> Two Extremities
> generate Four Aspects.
> Four Aspects
> generate Eight Trigrams.

It says again:

> One yin and one yang
> constitute the tao.

According to the Chinese, tao is The Way, The Way of nature, The Way of how things function in the universe. Yin and yang, heaven and earth, matter and energy are all considered to be an integrated whole.

They are eternally complimentary and eternally changing.

In *The Book of Change,* there are sixty-four passages. Each passage is represented by a hexagram. Each hexagram is a mathematical diagram consisting of six piled lines of two forms. One is solid, the other broken. The solid —— is yang, the broken — — is yin. These sixty-four hexagrams are the sixty-four possible arrangements of the forms of line. They represent all the potential types of changes which might appear in daily life. These possible types of changes are established by observing changes in the operation of the principles of positive force (yang) and negative force (yin) over a very long period of time. Through observation and experience, the ancient Chinese realized that yin and yang existed in everything. They also realized that yin and yang were opposites, but at the same time interdependent. Furthermore, they found that the alternation of yin and yang was cyclical rather than linear. When change reached a climax, or an extreme, yin became yang, and yang became yin. Continuity was brought about through alternation. Duration was achieved through continuity. Through duration, things completed their circles, reached new stages, and approached higher levels. Therefore, change became predictable. These concepts represent the ancient wisdom of the Chinese.

The components of hexagrams are trigrams. Each of the sixty-four hexagrams is constructed of two trigrams, and each trigram contains three lines. One line represents heaven, one earth, and one the human being. Heaven, earth, and human beings are the three basic concepts of Chinese cosmology. There are eight basic trigrams. In Tai-chi, the eight trigrams represent the Eight Directions.

The Appendix of the *I Ching* says:

> *The Book of Change* is a book vast and great,
> it contains everything, without omission.
> The tao of heaven is in it.
> The tao of earth is in it.

The tao of human beings is in it.
It combines these three primary powers
and doubles them;
that is why there are six lines.
The six lines are nothing other than
the tao of the Three Primary Powers.

The Chinese are a *chi*-oriented nationality. From the very beginning of their history they have believed that everything possesses *chi,* and that *chi* fills the Universe. The Chinese feel that heaven possesses heaven *chi,* earth possesses earth *chi,* and human beings possess human *chi.* In the *I Ching,* these are called the "Three Primary Powers." Nowadays, *chi* is understood to be a type of energy. We call it "vital energy."

To the Chinese, the heaven *chi* is made up of different universal forces or energies exerted from heavenly bodies onto the earth. If the heaven *chi* is harmonious and balanced, the weather will be favorable and good for crops. If the heaven *chi* is inharmonious and unbalanced, thunderstorms and lightning will come, the wind will blow, and rain will fall in order to rebalance the *chi.* In Chinese, weather is *tien-chi*; *tien* means "heaven." The earth itself is a huge mass, full of energy. During the eruption of a volcano, the tremendous, powerful energy of the earth is revealed. If you are receptive enough when you are walking barefoot on the earth, you can feel its vibration. I still remember that when I was young, every time I was ill, my grandmother urged me to get out of the house to get some earth *chi.* Earth *chi* is greatly influenced and affected by heaven *chi.* They constantly work together. When earth *chi* is harmonious and balanced, plants grow luxuriantly and animals thrive.

Each person possesses his or her own *chi* and forms their own *chi* field or aura. When people gather together, their *chi* influences and affects each other. When we are with people who are angry or depressed, we often feel uncomfortable ourselves, because their negative energy affects us. If our *chi* is balanced and in

harmony with heaven *chi,* earth *chi,* and other people's *chi,* we will be healthy and happy. Otherwise we will feel a sense of unhappiness and unease.

In addition to being *chi*-oriented, the Chinese are also very humanistic. They are realistic and pragmatic, but always concerned about the well-being of humans. This is why the Chinese have always been interested in health care, preventive medicine, rejuvenation, and longevity. They are positive thinkers, and believe that everything in the universe is for the good of human beings, as long as we live in harmony with nature.

If we understand these points of view, then we are able to understand the purpose and the importance of attuning the body, the breath, and the mind.

Attune the Body

Attuning the body, first of all, means learning to stand in balance and align the body with the line of gravity.

When standing in balance, our bodies should be erect and upright but never straight, because our body structures show that there are four curves in the spinal column. These four curves are the product of aligning body structure with gravitational force.

Standing in balance is the simplest posture. It sounds easy, but this is misleading. Theoretically, standing in balance is the most natural, relaxed, comfortable posture we can hold when standing up. While we are standing in balance, all the muscles around our spine, front or back, left or right, are in a state of balance and equilibrium. We don't need to expend any extra energy to hold the body upright, therefore it is the most restful posture we can achieve while standing. Unfortunately, not many people can do this. They feel comfortable with their old, improper postures because they have grown accustomed to them.

When I say "stand in balance, be natural and relaxed," I mean be natural with your body structure, in accordance with body mechanics. Gravitational force constantly pulls us down toward the center of

the earth. Most people are not aware of this and have formed bad posture. "Be relaxed," does not mean you should be collapsed. Uplift the spirit, be erect and upright. In the field of Tai-chi we say, "suspend the crown with unforced spirit."

The proper way to stand in balance is to point your feet straight ahead, hips' width apart, distributing weight evenly on the balls and heels of both feet. Also, make sure all ten toes touch the ground. If you can do this, your posture is more or less balanced at the first level.

If you are interested in correcting your posture, take time to look at the people around you, noticing how they walk. You might be surprised to find that about ninety-eight percent of all people do not walk with their feet pointing straight ahead. It would seem that many people love their cars more than their bodies. They put unleaded gasoline into their cars, but they eat junk food. They get the wheels of their cars aligned once a year, but they never align the balls and heels of their feet so they are pointing straight ahead while standing and walking. If the wheels of a car are out of alignment, the car shakes, and eventually becomes damaged. The same is true of our feet. If we don't stand with our feet pointing straight ahead, every step we take and every movement we perform will shake our body and its structure.

Why should the toes touch the ground? Standing or walking with ten toes touching the ground makes our bodies more stable, grounded, and steady. Try walking barefoot, with and then without the toes touching the ground, and you will notice the difference. Most of the time when practicing Tai-chi, we stand on one foot. Your position will become more stable if the toes are touching the ground. There are six acupuncture meridians that start or end at the end of the toes; each of these meridians is associated with an internal organ. They are the kidney, spleen, liver, bladder, gall bladder, and stomach; three yin meridians and three yang. If we walk with our toes touching the ground, then every step or every movement performs a sort of natural reflexology on our feet,

energizing and balancing the energy of these organs. This is the reason we practice Tai-chi with bare feet in my classes. Also, there is an acupuncture point called Kidney 1 on the sole of each foot. It is located at a point one-third the distance from the base of the second toe to the back of the heel. This point is called Bubbling Well. When massaging it, the sensation of a warm current surging upward all the way to the lower leg can be felt. Traditionally, Chinese people massage these two points to help themselves sleep or to lower high blood pressure. The ancient Taoist sages regarded them as the gates that absorb or exchange our *chi* with environmental *chi*. There are five gates in our bodies. These are the most sensitive acupuncture points. The other two, Pericardium 8, are on the center of our palms. They are called Labor Palace. These points are used in folk medicine to reduce body temperature during a fever. The fifth point is at the top of the crown, Governing Vessel 20. This point is called Hundred Meetings, because all the yang meridians meet at this point. It is used to clear the senses and calm the spirit.

To assimilate vital energy from heaven and earth is one of the chief aims of practicing Tai-chi or Chi-kung. Tai-chi is one of the highest forms of active Chi-kung. According to the *I Ching*, the human being is one of the three primary powers in the universe. We are between heaven and earth. When we stand in balance, we should consciously sense that we are a bridge between heaven and earth, and are assimilating vital energy from them. In the classes I teach, I always ask my students to build an image in their mind that they are standing upright and erect, like a tree. The balls and heels of the feet along with the toes take deep root in the ground, and the Bubbling Well points absorb the vibration of the yin earth *chi*. The crown is suspended from heaven, with the Hundred Meetings point absorbing the vital yang or heaven *chi*, and we grow like trees. The palms are like leaves with fingers, and the Labor Palace points assimilate vital energy between heaven and earth.

Keep this image in mind when you stand erect and

upright, relaxed but not collapsed, and follow the twenty-three key points of Standing in Stillness and Balance on page 93. Your body, and your body structure, will be in perfect synchronization with the line of gravity.

Attune the Breath

An ancient sage said:

> When the body is upright,
> the breath will be smooth.
> When the breath is smooth,
> the mind will be still.

To attune the breath is to make it smooth. After your breathing becomes smooth, attune it until it becomes long, deep, even, and calm. This kind of breathing not only makes the mind calm, but also supplies a larger amount of oxygen to the body from the air. Once oxygen comes into the lungs, it mixes with the blood and is carried to every cell of the body, to nourish them and keep them functioning well. The Chinese believe that when oxygen is taken in, universe energy, which they call the heaven *chi,* is also breathed in. This universe energy is important because it is helpful in obtaining radiant health.

There are several different methods of breathing. Belly breathing is recommended for beginners. In such breathing, the belly expands during inhalation and contracts during exhalation. It is the up and down movement of the diaphragm that makes the belly expand and contract. Our lungs cannot bring in and draw out air, they need help from the muscles around them, especially the diaphragm. When we practice belly breathing, while inhaling we gently and intentionally press the diaphragm down to make room for the air coming into the lungs; while exhaling we release the pressure and let the diaphragm naturally move up and press the air out. Because the diaphragm moves up and down with exhalation and inhalation, it is sometimes called diaphragm breathing.

Belly breathing is the most natural form of breathing. Unfortunately, when growing up, most people lose this instinctive movement by employing chest breathing. In belly breathing, inhalation is usually longer than exhalation. In this way we obtain more oxygen. Moreover, beneath the diaphragm is the stomach, on its right is the liver, on its left is the spleen, and underneath are the intestines. When we move the diaphragm up and down, we actually massage these inner organs. This massage increases the blood and *chi* circulation around them, and greatly improves the digestion of food and the assimilation of nutrients. It also assists in the elimination of waste. After the ancient sages found these secrets, they greatly advocated belly breathing and considered this action to be a return to the manner of respiration of the embryo in the womb. When we practice this breathing, we intentionally move the belly in and out. Gradually our natural instincts will come back and provide us with more oxygen and heaven *chi.*

An ancient sage once said:

> When inhaling, the earth *chi* rises;
> when exhaling, the heaven *chi* descends.
> When humans breathe at the navel,
> their human *chi* naturally connects with
> the *chi* of heaven and earth.

Another sage said:

> Common people breathe at the throat;
> a true person breathes from the heels.

When we attune the breath, we must learn to breathe from the heels. Breathing from the heels sounds ridiculous, but not to the Chinese. For the Chinese, it is not breathing the air, it is absorbing the earth *chi* through the Bubbling Wells, two acupuncture points on the soles of the feet. When doing this, visualize and feel the sensation of a warm current coming from the soles of the feet all the way up to the

crown while inhaling. While exhaling, the sensation of the warm current will go down from the crown to the bottom of the feet. After practicing for a short period of time, you will experience a sensation of becoming warmer and warmer. This is not your imagination, most of those who practice experience this feeling.

When attuning the breath, it is important to keep the tongue touched to the roof of the mouth. This is because there are two important meridians located on the center line of the front and back of the body. When the tongue touches the palate, it makes the two meridians connect. The first meridian is the governing meridian. It rises from the abdomen, emerges from the perineum, then ascends along the inside of the spine until it reaches the nape of the neck. It enters the brain and moves to the top of the head, follows the middle of the forehead, crosses the bridge of the nose, and ends at the upper lip. The governing meridian is known as the sea of the yang meridians, because it meets all the yang meridians. Its function is to govern the *chi* of all the yang meridians.

Another meridian is the conception meridian. It starts from the inside of the lower abdomen, emerges from the perineum, ascends along the midline of the abdomen and chest, crosses the throat and the lower jaw, then curves around the lips, ending in the region of the eyes. The conception meridian is known as the sea of the yin meridians, because it meets all the yin meridians. Its function is to receive and bear the *chi* of all the yin meridians.

Because each of these two meridians emerges from the perineum, one of them ends at the lower jaw and the other passes through the upper jaw. When the tongue touches the palate it makes the circuit of these two meridians close, allowing the *chi* to circulate through them. When the tongue touches the palate it also makes the mouth generate more saliva, which the Chinese call "jade juice." Saliva is important because it helps in the digestion of food.

When we practice Tai-chi, movements should be intentionally coordinated with breathing. Otherwise,

it is merely an exercise, not Tai-chi. When breathing becomes longer and deeper, the movements will become slower and calmer. Because movements of Tai-chi are complex, various parts of the body must be coordinated. It might be difficult for the beginner to coordinate movements with breathing. Therefore, when attuning the breath, it is better to do some simple movements, such as raising arms to shoulder level and bringing them down to the sides of the body, and coordinate these with your breathing. When raising the arms, inhale and feel the earth *chi* ascend from the feet all the way up to the crown and the fingertips. When bringing the arms down, exhale and feel the heaven *chi* descend from the crown all the way down to the feet and the toes. In my class, we practice preliminary Tai-chi and walking meditation, which are designed to coordinate breathing with simple, basic Tai-chi movements, at the same time stretching muscles and tendons. This serves as a warm-up before practicing Tai-chi.

Attune the Mind

Attuning the mind means making the mind still. Stilling the mind is of primary importance in all kinds of Chi-kung and meditation, including Tai-chi.

The Chinese saint, Confucius, said:

> First you must be still,
> then your mind can be steady.
> Once your mind is steady,
> you are able to be calm.
> Only when you are calm,
> are you able to contemplate and obtain.

These five processes combined are the most well-known procedure of attuning the mind when meditating. Making the mind still is a prelude to contemplation. In meditation, or static (without movement) Chi-kung classes, I teach the practitioner to focus attention on the tip of the nose, at the same time holding the state of consciousness steady at his *tan-tien.* He should either watch the breath as it flows

in and out from his nose, or watch the lower abdomen as it goes forward and backward at the *tan-tien.* At first, I ask the practitioner to count his breaths. Once the breath is smooth and even, then he should stop counting and just watch, or listen to his breathing. Finally, he will forget about his breathing. This is a process of training the practitioner to shift the mind from observation to non-observation, from mindlessness to mindfulness. In practicing Tai-chi, we focus on breathing in a different way, but the principles are the same.

Tai-chi is a kind of contemplation with movement. The aim of this contemplation with movement is to be thoughtless, but not mindless. It is full of mindfulness. At first, be mindful of the postures and movements, then of the coordination of movement with breathing. At last, be mindful to not be mindful of the postures, movements, and breathing. At this stage, we enter into a different dimension. As our breathing becomes calmer and calmer, deeper and deeper, our postures, our movements, our minds, our whole beings, do the same. At this level, we are completely free. The practice of Tai-chi is a process of purifying the body, the mind, and the spirit.

The coordination of movements with breathing is based on changes in the motions. This coordination is one of the chief characteristics of Tai-chi, and should be done intentionally. Always remember that without this coordination, it is not Tai-chi.

In order for the beginner to learn how to coordinate movements with breathing, two principles are summarized:

1. Inhale while you are contracting, rising, bending, and lifting.
2. Exhale while you are expanding, lowering, extending, and falling.

Most importantly, the coordination of the two should be natural and comfortable. If you feel your breathing is not smooth and comfortable, it might be linked to a problem with your postures. After pin-

pointing the problem spot, you will be able to coordinate your movements with your breathing, gradually making your breathing deeper, longer, and softer. After you have increased the quality of your breathing, the quality of your movements will expand accordingly.

When you are able to coordinate your movements and your breathing with ease, you can forget about them. At this stage, when you are practicing Tai-chi, simply enjoy the feeling that you are a channel between heaven and earth, and that all the vital *chi* between heaven and earth is flowing in and out of your body. At this moment, you are truly able to enjoy contemplation with movement, and dance with your spirit.

PART
II

The History of the Origin and Development of Tai-chi

CHAPTER

3

Exploring Legend and Confusion

HOW DID this art, full of benefit and surrounded by an aura of mystery, come to be? Imagine two established orders—the traditional martial arts and the Taoist internal breathing system—each the product of hundreds, or even thousands of years of evolution. At a point in history they met and intertwined, and the resulting entity, much more powerful and useful than either of its components alone, initiated a new tradition which began to undergo its own evolution. This is the story of Tai-chi. In presenting it here, I have taken a roughly chronological approach, from origin and early development to later development and the current state of Tai-chi. In addition to this historical background, some examples of the literature it produced, translations of the classics, are included in Part IV.

In the most widely known legends of Tai-chi, Chang San-feng, a Taoist sage of the mountain of Wu Tang, is purported to have originated this esoteric, or internal system of martial arts. Later, Chang was credited with authorship of *The Tai-chi Chuan Classic,* which was then considered the most important of the classic works, because it was purportedly written by the original master of Tai-chi. His lifetime has been placed in both the Sung dynasty (960–1279) and the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) because, coincidentally,

there were two Taoist sages with similar names. In Chinese, the two names have the same sound, but the forms of the last characters, *feng*, are different. The first name means "Three Mountain Peaks," while the second means "Three Abundances," but both names are pronounced in the same manner. *San* means "three." One legend states that Chang learned Tai-chi from a dream. This legend was fabricated by Huang Li-chou, a well-known scholar of the Ming dynasty. Huang was asked to write an epitaph for Wang Chengnan, an internal martial artist of the Ming dynasty. At the beginning of the epitaph, Huang wrote, "Shaoling is famous for its martial arts. Its arts are primarily combative, but opponents can still take the advantage. There are internal martial arts which employ stillness to overcome activeness. As soon as the invaders come into bodily contact, they immediately fall. For this reason, Shao-ling is regarded as an external martial art. The internal martial arts originated with Chang San-feng (Chang, Three Mountain Peaks) of the Sung dynasty, who was an alchemist on the mountain of Wu Tang. He received a summons from Emperor Hui Tsung. On his way to see him, he found the road blocked by a group of gangsters. That night, he dreamed that the heavenly emperor Hsuan-ti, a legendary Taoist god, taught him martial arts. The following morning, Chang killed over a hundred gangsters." Another story says that one day after meditating he saw a snake and a crane fighting, and watched them attentively for a long time. The crane kept trying to spear the snake with its beak, but the snake's circular and spiral movements were so flexible that it was able to easily evade the bird's firm and forceful thrust. The fighting lasted for several hours, and finally the snake conquered the crane. From this incident, according to legend, Chang gained the realization that softness overcomes hardness, and that circular movements overcome straight. It was from this observation that he created a soft style of martial arts.

The legends are beautiful, but research shows reality to be different. Several writers have credited

Chang San-feng with fantastic exploits in boxing as well as great longevity (indicating that the Chang of both the Sung and Ming dynasties was the same person). However, in the official histories of the Sung, Yuan, and Ming dynasties of China covering the period from 960–1644, there is no indication whatsoever that Chang San-feng was familiar with any kind of martial art or even practiced Tai-chi. The official history of the Ming dynasty, in a section called "Biography of Artisans," lists Chang San-feng (Chang, Three Abundances) as a native of the Yi district of the Province of Liaoning in northern China. He is listed as having been a Taoist leader between the end of the Yuan dynasty and the beginning of the Ming dynasty. He traveled widely, and eventually built a cottage on the mountain of Wu Tang, where he concentrated on the study and practice of Taoism. In *The Complete Works of Chang San-feng,* a book compiled by Taoist master Wong Hsi-ling in 1723 and compiled again by another Taoist master, Li Han-hsu, in 1844, there is no mention of Chang San-feng having had any knowledge of Tai-chi or martial arts, although both authors said they had seen him.

Many Tai-chi books published in the West have merely repeated the legends, while others, whose authors were perhaps aware of the discrepancies, have addressed the problem by stating that the founder is simply unknown. In modern China, those of a conservative viewpoint held to the legends that named Chang San-feng as the founder, while a more liberal faction began to raise doubts. It is fortunate that research in mainland China, undertaken with the aim of validating or disproving the various legends and arriving at a unified and correct history of the art of Tai-chi, has answered many questions. It is due to this research that more of the facts can now be presented.

The question of origin has plagued interested practitioners for some time. Even in 1867, Master Li Yi-yu (1831–92), author of several of the classics, credited Chang San-feng with the origination of Tai-chi. In his first draft of an early work entitled *A Brief*

Introduction to Tai-chi Chuan, written in 1867, he stated that "Tai-chi was initiated from Chang San-feng (Chang, Three Abundances) of the Sung dynasty," but something caused him to change his mind and later correct his manuscript. In 1880, in his three original handwritten copies of the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise,* Master Li wrote, "We don't know the originator of Tai-chi, but all its mysteries are explained by Wang Tsung-yu, almost nothing remains untold. At last it came to Chen Chia Kou in Henan where Chen's family practiced expertly, generation after generation." It is quite likely that Li got his original reference about Chang San-feng from Master Yang Lu-chan (1799–1872), a revered teacher of Li's uncle Wu Yu-hsiang (1812–80).

Chang San-feng's (Chang, Three Abundances) *Tai-chi Chuan Classic* first appeared in 1925 in the book *The Technique of Tai-chi Chuan* by Chen Wei-ming, a student of Master Yang Cheng-fu (1883–1936), eminent founder of the contemporary Yang style of Tai-chi and the grandson of Yang Lu-chan. Because the book contained pictures of Master Yang's postures, it was widely distributed, and the legend of Chang as the founder of Tai-chi grew. An interesting footnote at the end of the classic says:

> This treatise was left by the Patriarch Chang San-feng [Chang, Three Abundances] of the Wu-Tang Mountain. He expected people of exceptional ability all over the world to obtain good health and longevity, not only the minor details of technique.

This footnote caused many people to question the truth of the legend. If this treatise were really written by Patriarch Chang San-feng, it would not have been necessary to add a footnote written by someone else. At this point, the research began. One of the first researchers was Tang Hao. In 1932, he went to Chen Chia Kou with Chen Tzu-ming, a member of the eighteenth generation of Chen's family, to consult with members of the Chen family and examine their ancestral records. This is where Master Yang Lu-chan

learned Tai-chi. He found no references to Chang San-feng nor any mention of the origins of Tai-chi. However, the record clearly indicated that the originator of the Chen family martial arts, referred to as The Thirteen Positions, was their ancestor Chen Wang-ting (1597–1664). Tang's survey also led him to conclude that Chen's martial art was largely adopted from the martial techniques and written works of the famous Ming dynasty general Chi Chi-kuang (1528–87), who became one of the greatest national heroes in Chinese history after defeating invaders from the sea. General Chi had summarized and systematized sixteen of the most outstanding folk martial arts practiced during the Ming dynasty, and from those sources had compiled the *Pugilism Classic of Thirty-two Postures* for the soldiers to use in practice. Thus, Tang's analysis was that Tai-chi had its origins in the people and had been synthesized and developed over the course of many years.

This theory of the origin of Tai-chi seemed acceptable to many, but a more conservative faction still clung to the legends, which had gained reinforcement from a book published in 1933, the year after Tang Hao traveled to Chen Chia Kou. In *The Theory and Practice of Tai-chi Chuan* by Master Yang Cheng-fu, the following statement appears:

> Grandfather said that Tai-chi Chuan was initiated by Chang San-feng [Chang, Three Abundances]. He handed it down to Wang Tsung-yu, Wang handed it down to Chen Chow-tung, Chen handed it down to Chang Sung-chi, and Chang handed it down to Chiang Fa. Master Chen Chang-hsing was the only student of Chiang Fa.

Problems were inherent in the succession as outlined above by Yang Lu-chan for his grandson. According to the book *Tai-chi Chuan Handed Down Through the Generations,* by Chen Tzu-ming, Chiang Fa was a subordinate officer of Li Chi-yu, who was a close friend of Chen Wang-ting. After Li Chi-yu was killed during the defeat and takeover of the Ming dynasty by

the Ching dynasty, Chiang Fa sought refuge at Chen's home and became an attendant of Chen Wang-ting. In the ancestral temple, the family has preserved a portrait of Chen Wang-ting with Chiang Fa standing by his side, holding a sabre. Since Chiang Fa was a contemporary of Chen Wang-ting, who was of the ninth generation of the Chen family, and Chen Chang-hsing (Yang Lu-chan's teacher) was of the fourteenth generation, it is highly improbable that Chiang Fa was Chen Chang-hsing's teacher. Furthermore, this date also renders it impossible for Wang Tsung-yu who, research now indicates, lived at the end of the eighteenth century, to have passed the art down through two generations of students to Chiang Fa in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Pointing out these flaws in an attempt to connect Chang San-feng (either Three Mountain Peaks or Three Abundances) with the origination of the modern system of Tai-chi, and to delineate an unbroken succession of the transmittal of the art, is in no way designed to belittle the Taoists' very essential contribution. At present the early history of Tai-chi is incomplete, but the rediscovery in the 1960s of some treasured original documents written in 1881 has shown conclusively that the *Tai-chi Chuan Classic* of Chang San-feng is a composite of portions of the works of other masters.

CHAPTER

4

A Historical Overview of the Most Important Contributors

Chen Wang-ting and the Chen Family Martial Arts

TAI-CHI is a product of the blending of traditional martial-arts techniques with Taoist internal breathing systems. The person who was responsible for that synthesis and, thus, the person who deserves to be called the originator of the modern systems of Tai-chi, was Chen Wang-ting (1597–1664), a member of the ninth generation of the Chen family.

In the final years of Chung Cheng, the last emperor of the Ming dynasty, there was a scourge of invasions, and intellectuals were urged to study military subjects in order to protect their homes and defend their country. Among these intellectuals was Chen Wang-ting, who was very knowledgeable in both literary and martial arts. The official history of Wen County states that from 1618–21, he was an officer in the Province of Shangtung. In 1641 he was an officer of the Ming dynasty in charge of the garrison force in Wen County. The genealogy records of the Chen family compiled in 1873 help fill in the picture. The following information was found regarding Chen Wang-ting: at the end of the Ming dynasty he was a member of the local official school for martial arts, and at the beginning of the Ching dynasty he served in a similar capacity. He was famous in the Province of Shangtung for his defeat of over one-thousand

invaders. In addition, he was designated as the originator of Chen's fist, hand, sabre, and spear martial arts, and was given the accolade of "talent hero." The family still has a sabre that belonged to him. After the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644, Chen withdrew from society and lived in solitude at home.

It is believed that Chen originated Tai-chi in the seventh decade of the seventeenth century, within thirty years of the fall of the Ming dynasty. From his reference to *The Yellow Court Canon,* a Taoist classic on *do-ying*[1] and *tu-na,*[2] the ancient Chinese breathing techniques for health, longevity, and immortality, we learn about one of his sources for the new forms of martial arts. He derived these new forms in his last years for his own entertainment, and practiced with his entire family—brothers, sons, and grandsons. Tang's research, mentioned earlier, also identified the *Pugilism Classic of Thirty-Two Postures* by General Chi-Kuang as another major source. This classic work formed a connecting link between all previous Chinese martial arts, a link which could be traced back to the first emperor Chao Kuang-yin of the Sung dynasty, who compiled his famous *Thirty-Two Postures of the Long Chuan,* and to all later developments of Chinese martial arts.

Chen, in forming his own style of martial arts, adopted twenty-nine postures from General Chi's thirty-two, as well as from various other sources of external martial arts. Both General Chi's classic writings and Chen's *Seven Routes of Tai-chi* started with Grasping Sparrow's Tail. From this we know how deeply he was influenced by General Chi, but this does not mean that Chen plagiarized the General's martial arts, nor does it mean that General Chi created Tai-chi. Chen's great contribution was that

[1] *Do* means to lead, *ying* means to guide. *Do-ying* is a system of movements coordinated with leading and guiding of the breath. One of the classics says, "Lead and guide the *chi* to cure unformed diseases. When *chi* is led and guided, it flows smoothly all over the body."

[2] *Tu* means "to exhale," *na* means "to inhale." One of the classics says, "Exhale and inhale outside the cottage; the *chi* comes out and goes in through the *tan-tien.*"

upon inheriting General Chi's excellent work, he weeded out the old and brought forth the new by blending the martial arts with the Taoist internal breathing system of *do-ying* and *tu-na*. He combined the external martial-art technique of hands, eyes, body, and steps with the ancient Taoist technique of inhaling, exhaling, and circulating *chi* through the acupuncture meridians to form an integrated working unit. This new synthesis stressed the unity of mind, breath, and movement with the harmony of inner feeling and outer motion. He also introduced the use of proper breathing to cultivate intrinsic energy *(chi)*, and non-muscular strength *(jing)*. Rather than developing muscular strength, as in the external martial arts, he developed a method for mobilizing this new energy with minimum expenditure. Thus, he originated a new internal martial art.

In the records of Chen's martial arts kept by the Chen family, it can be seen that there were five routes (or systems) of martial art which would become known as Tai-chi Chuan, but which at that time were simply called the Thirteen Positions. The first route emphasized slowness, softness, and stability of movement, while the second route contained more swiftness, hardness, and high jumping. Both, however, harmonized softness with firmness. In addition, there was one route of Long Chuan consisting of 108 postures, and one route of *pao chui,* the canon fist or canon punch. The latter was more complicated, with more firmness and less softness than the first route. Its form of attack emphasized the four corners—pull, split, elbow strike, and shoulder force—while the four directions—forward, backward, left, and right—played supplementary roles. These seven routes were blended with the ancient Taoist breathing techniques to become a new internal school of martial arts. Collectively, these seven routes are the original routes of Tai-chi, but the sources of both the martial techniques and the breathing techniques can be traced back over thousands of years.

There are several qualities in Chen's new internal school which are different from those of the external

school of martial arts. He applied the Taoist philosophy of yin and yang to martial art, developing and enriching the art with the theory of clearly distinguishing the insubstantial from the substantial. He adopted the law of non-aggression and non-resistance, cultivated the ability of using softness to overcome hardness, and instituted the technique of borrowing force from the opponent (using four ounces to deflect a thousand pounds). He created continuing circular movement and spiral motion. As one of the classics tells us, "Seek the straight from the curved. Back and forth, there should be folding and alternation; advancing and retreating, there should be rotation and variation. If the body is touched, no matter how lightly, one should revolve smoothly and freely."

Additionally, Chen initiated the method of Joint Hands as a practical application of the postures. He also developed the skills of adhering and cohering ("whether touching or joining, pursuing or counteracting, there should be no letting go and no resisting"), and using the sensitivity of the skin to perceive the inner feeling of the body. Finally, he applied these skills to combat with weapons.

Contributions of Wang Tsung-yu

The story of Wang Tsung-yu represents one of the larger gaps in the factual history of Tai-chi. Neither the exact connection between Wang Tsung-yu and the Chen family nor the precise dates of Wang's birth and death have yet been traced. It is known that he was a native of Shensi Province and well known as a writer in the field of martial arts. It was he who first gave the name of Tai-chi Chuan to Chen's martial arts. Modern research indicates that Wang lived during the reign of Emperor Chien Lung of the Ching dynasty. Historical records show that in 1791, in his old age, he lived in Luyang, where he opened a private school and made his living as a teacher. He moved to Kaifeng in 1795, continued his teaching, and was still living in 1796. Luyang and Kaifeng were

two famous cities in the Province of Henan on the other side of the Yellow River from Chen Chia Kou, the birthplace of Tai-chi. Wang lived in Luyang and Kaifeng during the time of the fourth generation after Chen Wang-ting. It was a period of great popularity for the martial arts created by Chen Wang-ting, and it is believed that Wang learned Chen's martial arts at this time.

When he was young, Wang studied traditional classics and history, all the Taoist philosophical works of Huang-ti the Yellow Emperor, Lao Tze, and Chuang Tze; and various books on military strategy and tactics. He also had a good practical command of martial arts, especially spear fighting. Besides *Treatise of the Spear,* his most respected written work is the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise.* It was after the appearance of Wang's works on Tai-chi that Chen's martial arts became known as Tai-chi Chuan. Because of his lifelong study, Wang was a genius both in civil matters and in military ability. He studied and practiced martial arts over several decades, thoroughly understanding the unique essence of Chen's martial arts as well as the fact that it was all based upon the theory of Tai-chi and yin and yang.

In writing his *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* and *The Thirteen Positions,* Wang was able to summarize and theorize Chen's martial art and explain it in a philosophical manner, connecting it to its roots in the *I Ching (The Book of Change)* and the *Diagram of Tai-chi.* His *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* begins with:

> Tai-chi comes from Wu-chi,
> it is the mother of yin and yang.
> In motion yin and yang differentiate;
> in stillness, they integrate.

In the above stanza, Tai-chi means "The Primary Beginning," while Wu-chi means "The Great Void," or "The Great Void Before the Primary Beginning."

This idea was clearly adopted from the famous book *A Diagram of Tai-chi,* by the most distinguished

Taoist philosopher and metaphysician of the Sung dynasty, Chow Teng-yi (1017–73). It reads:

> Wu-chi, then Tai-chi.
> Tai-chi moves, generates yang.
> Stillness generates yin.
> Yin to the extremity, moves again.
> One move, one stillness,
> supplemented at their root.
> Differentiates yin, differentiates yang:
> two poles established.

The circular and cyclical nature of the movements of Tai-chi also have their roots here in the sense that there is a flowing exchange between the static and the dynamic.

In *The Thirteen Positions,* Wang enumerates which of the thirteen basic positions correspond with the Eight Trigrams, and which are the Five Stages of Change (also known as the Five Elements). The concept of the Eight Trigrams and their connection with Tai-chi (it is "Ultimate Extremity," not Tai-chi at this point) is derived from the *I Ching* (See Introduction, p. 13).

Wang's written contributions had a deep and lasting influence on the development of Tai-chi, and were highly respected and utilized by later practitioners who wanted to truly understand their art. All the other styles of Tai-chi which appeared later were developed by masters who had studied Wang's *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise.* The continuing development and popularity of Tai-chi today offers additional testimony to the value of his contribution. In addition to the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* (which is actually an explanation of Joint Hands), the *Treatise of Spears* and *The Thirteen Positions* (an explanation of Tai-chi), he also revised the *Chant of Joint Hands,* by an unknown master.

Contributions of Yang Lu-chan and Wu Yu-hsiang

Traditionally, Tai-chi was regarded as the treasure of the Chen family, and was rarely shown to outsiders. The teachings were passed on from father to son, with

few notable exceptions. One very important exception, however, was Yang Lu-chan (1799–1872) who, along with his descendants, would eventually bring Tai-chi to the public.

Yang Lu-chan, a native of Yungnian County, came from a poor family. When he was about ten years old he left home and eventually found shelter in Chen Chia Kou, Wen County, Henan Province, the birthplace of Tai-chi. There he became a bond-attendant boy in the household of Chen Te-hu, who was a member of the Imperial Academy in the feudal China of the Ching dynasty. Chen Te-hu enjoyed watching skilled martial artists and became a faithful devotee of the arts. Each evening the esteemed instructor Chen Chang-hsing (1771–1853) of the fourteenth generation of the Chen family gathered Chen's relatives and descendants in Chen Te-hu's yard and taught them Tai-chi (at the time it was called The Thirteen Positions).

Yang was clever and intelligent, and served both his master and the instructor Chen Chang-hsing eagerly and attentively, in the end winning their hearts. In keeping with tradition, Chen Chang-hsing taught his own son and other relatives, and because Yang was a bond-attendant boy, he was considered part of the family. Chen Chang-hsing accepted him as his apprentice, allowing him to practice martial arts with the family. Yang studied hard, practiced diligently, understood the key points of the arts, and became an outstanding student.

When Yang was about forty years old, his master Chen Te-hu died—an occurrence which would prove to be a major turning point in the history of Tai-chi. It is doubtful that Tai-chi would have become known outside the Chen family without this development. Chen Te-hu's wife, who was close to Yang in age, felt that because she was a widow it would not be appropriate for Yang to remain in the house. She burned Yang's deed of bond and set him free, sending him back to his place of birth. When he returned home to Yungnien County, he took up residence in the Tai-he Chinese herb store, a business

that was owned by his former master Chen Te-hu and housed in a building belonging to the Wu family. There, he began to teach Tai-chi for a living.

The Wu family was very learned. The great-grandfather, grandfather, father, elder brother, and younger brother of Wu Yu-hsiang (1812–80), as well as Wu Yu-hsiang himself, were all enthusiastic practitioners of martial arts. The three brothers greatly admired Yang's form and techniques, and asked him to teach them. Because Yang's martial art could neutralize and overcome the tremendous force of his opponent, it was known as the "neutralized martial art," or the "soft art." Yang taught them the Chen family's old-style Tai-chi, but Wu Yu-hsiang soon realized that Yang was not likely to transmit all the secrets of his techniques. Because he had a strong desire to understand the profundities of Tai-chi, he decided to learn from Yang's teacher Chen Chang-hsing (of the fifth generation after Chen Wang-ting).

A short time earlier, in 1852, Wu's elder brother Wu Shen-ching had been appointed to government office at Wuyang County in the Province of Henan, on the other side of the river. On the way to see his brother, Wu Yu-hsiang attempted to visit Chen Chang-hsing. However, when he reached Chaopao County, halfway to Chen's place, people told him that Chen Chang-hsing was eighty-two years old, very sick, and close to death. They told him that Chen Ching-ping, also an excellent instructor of the Chen family, was teaching there. Since Wu had no choice but to find another teacher, he became a student of Chen Ching-ping. Chen Ching-ping was of the fifteenth generation of the Chen family and the nephew of Chen You-peng, a cousin of Chen Chang-hsing.

Wu soon understood that what Chen Ching-ping was teaching was not Chen Chang-hsing's old style, but a new style he had derived from it. This was known in Chen's family as the circular style or Chaopao style, because Chen Ching-ping taught it in Chaopao town where he lived with his wife's family. After several months, Wu believed he had fully grasped the essence of the Chaopao style, so he left town. He told his

brother, "About the theory and techniques of Chen's martial arts, [we] now know at last; from now on, everything depends on our own hard work."

Around this same time his elder brother Wu Shen-ching happened upon an original copy of Wang Tsung-yu's *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* at a salt shop in Wuyang County. He immediately notified Wu Yu-hsiang, who left at once, traveling a great distance to his brother's place to read and study it. In the treatise, Wang explained the theory of Tai-chi, its ancient Taoist philosophy of yin and yang, and how it applied to practice and application. Wang's work concluded with the statement, "In this art, the student should not overlook the importance of distinguishing truth from falsehood. For this reason, this treatise was made."

After painstaking study of Wang's treatise and the application of this knowledge to his practice, Wu had a greater comprehension of the essence of Tai-chi than ever before. This valuable insight enabled him to probe and penetrate the mysteries of Chen's Tai-chi. Eventually he wrote the famous treatises *Essentials of Joint Hands, Body Methods,* and the *Four Word Non-transmitted Secret Formula,* as well as various other works with respect to Tai-chi. All of these were based upon his own experience and understanding. They were simple and clear, and every word was weighed with great care. Finally, Wu created his own style of Tai-chi, now known as Y.H. Wu's style, which was much smaller, and different from both the old style and the new style of the Chen family. (It was also different from Yang's big style and small style, which would evolve later.)

During this time, the Wu brothers had not forgotten their former teacher, Yang Lu-chan. Wu sent copies of Wang's treatise and of his own written works to Yang when he was teaching the royal family in Peking. It was Wu's younger brother, a high official at the Szechuan Province Ministry of Punishment during the feudal Ching dynasty, who recommended that Yang teach Tai-chi to the royal family and the court of the Ching dynasty. There he became popularly known as Yang the Undefeated because his art was so extraor-

dinary. Later, he was appointed instructor to the emperor's Eight Banners Guards, whose members were all from Mongolia. Toward the end of his life, he began to teach the public. He passed his art on to his sons, who continued the popularization of Tai-chi.

Wu Yu-hsiang spent the rest of his life in his home province, although his brothers continued to work as high officials outside of the province. He taught and studied the fine arts and martial arts to entertain himself, and never stopped practicing Tai-chi. Even while he was very sick and bedridden, he never tired of discussing Tai-chi with those who attended to him. Among his students, his nephew Li Yi-yu (1831–92) was the best.

Contributions of Li Yi-yu

In 1853, when Li Yi-yu was twenty-two years old, he began to learn Tai-chi from his uncle Wu Yu-hsiang. Wu put forth great effort in teaching his nephew, employing both detailed verbal instruction and actual demonstration. Concurrently, Li gave his utmost to the study and practice of Tai-chi over the next twenty years.

Li started his study of Tai-chi at about the same time Wu and his brother came into possession of a copy of Wang's *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise*. Like his Uncle Wu, Li studied this work assiduously, seeking profound meaning in each word, and his martial arts improved greatly. Eventually, he began to add to the written literature on Tai-chi. The most important of his works are *Essentials of Practice of Postures and Joint Hands, Five Word Formula, Secret Formula of Casting and Discharging,* and *A Brief Introduction to Tai-chi Chuan.*

Li was a physician. Like his uncle Wu Yu-hsiang, he rarely accepted students, but he did transmit his art to his closest friend Hao Wei-ching (1849–1920). This provided a vehicle for the later development of the Sung style of Tai-chi, at least in terms of historical perspective. This fact has only recently come to light. In 1881, with an attitude of deep respect, and using the most dignified calligraphy, Li made three copies of the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* and other works by Wang

Tsung-yu, and put them together with all the works of his uncle Wu Yu-hsiang as well as his own writings. He kept the first copy, asked his younger brother to keep the second copy, and gave his closest friend and student Hao Wei-ching the third copy for safekeeping. People in Yungnien County, his place of birth, knew of these three original copies and looked upon them with great respect, calling them the Old Three Copies. Later, they were revered as the classics that people should use to learn and practice Tai-chi. It should be noted that the copy he gave Hao Wei-ching to keep did not contain Wu Yu-hsiang's *Four Word Non-transmitted Secret Formula* because he obeyed his uncle's will that this formula should not be transmitted to anyone else.

Fortunately, these three original handwritten copies have been preserved. They are an extremely interesting and valuable source of information about the history of Tai-chi and the people who were important to its development. In *A Brief Introduction to Tai-chi Chuan,* Li tells of his uncle Wu's dissatisfaction with how little of this art Yang Lu-chan was willing to reveal, and of how he found Chen Ching-ping to be his teacher. Of himself, Li wrote with characteristic Chinese humility, "In 1853, in my twenties, I learned this art from my uncle. He taught me verbally and spent all his time and energy on me; but I was very dull, so after twenty years, I only got the skin and fur. Thus I have written down what I experienced and composed the *Five Word Formula* so I would not forget what I learned."

Of particular importance when filling in some of the gaps in the history of Tai-chi is the fact that the study of these original documents revealed that the so-called *Tai-chi Chuan Classic* was not written by Chang San-feng, as had been believed by many people. Rather, it is made up of parts of works by Wang Tsung-yu and Wu Yu-hsiang.

Hao Wei-ching and Sung Lu-tang

Hao Wei-ching was a fellow villager who became a friend of Li Yi-yu. He had long been a martial arts

enthusiast, but when he saw Li's form of Tai-chi he decided to give up all the other arts and study with Li. Li and his uncle Wu Yu-hsiang were scholarly men from a prominent and wealthy family, and were very selective about teaching their form of Tai-chi to other people. But after Hao Wei-ching had proven himself through diligent study and practice for over six years, Li saw that he was sincere and earnest, and taught him wholeheartedly. From that time on, Hao Wei-ching's skills improved rapidly, and he attained particular excellence in Joint Hands. It is said that he could set up a chair ten feet away, direct his Joint Hands partner toward the chair and place him on it without the chair or the partner falling down.

When the Republic of China was first established in 1912, Hao Wei-ching went to Peking to visit relatives and friends, among them Yang Chien-hau, the third son of Yang Lu-chan. While he was there he became ill, and a man named Sung Lu-tang (1861–1932) invited him to stay at his home so he could consult doctors and care for him. After he recovered, in appreciation of Sung's kindness and sincerity, Hao Wei-ching taught him Wu Yu-hsiang's form of Tai-chi.

Sung Lu-tang was originally from Wen County, Hepei Province. He became devoted to martial arts when he was very young. He studied Hsing-yi and Pa-kua for many years, attained their quintessence, and acquired a good reputation in Peking. His nickname was The Living Monkey. Sung was already fifty years old at the time Hao Wei-ching taught him Tai-chi, but he was still able to achieve the highest level of mastery of the martial art. Later, after much additional comprehensive study, he created the Sung style of Tai-chi by adding certain aspects of Hsing-yi and Pa-kua to the Wu form he had learned from Hao Wei-ching.

CHAPTER

5

The Development of Tai-chi— New Styles Emerge

Evolution of the Chen Family Style

Due to continuous enrichment and refinement during the more than three-hundred years since its synthesis by Chen Wang-ting, Tai-chi has become the most popular exercise in China. In the beginning it was practiced by almost everyone in the Chen family village; male and female, young and old, generation after generation. The Chen family's historical records tell us that there was nothing outstanding about the martial arts of Chen Wang-ting's three sons and one grandson, but that one particular great-grandson was exceptional. After this there were no successors of the direct lineage who could properly carry on Chen's art. However, in the fourth generation of a relative there were three brothers, Ping-ren, Ping-wong, and Ping-chi, who became famous practitioners and were known by the people as the Three Great Talent Heroes of the Chen family.

The New Form

The fifth generation after Chen Wang-ting proved to be a turning point for Tai-chi. By the time of the Three Great Talent Heroes, the original Seven Routes of Tai-chi had begun to be simplified. The original 108 postures of the Long Chuan and the

second to the fifth route of the Thirteen Positions were practiced by only a few. On the other end of the scale, however, the first route and the Canon Fist (which is now the second route of Chen-style Tai-chi), together with Joint Hands and Adhering Spears were constantly being improved. Thus, in the fifth generation, to render it suitable for different kinds of practitioners, the original first route was changed into the old form and the new form. In the new form initiated by Chen You-peng the postures were as big as in the old form, but he had gradually taken out many of the postures that were difficult to perform. The Chen family called it the simplified form.

The Circular Form

In the next generation, yet another form evolved. Initiated by one of Chen You-peng's estimable disciples, his nephew Chen Ching-ping, this form was smaller and slower than the original. After the basic postures were learned, one could use them as a base upon which to add more and more circular movement, from simple to complicated, becoming by degree more complex, and leading up to very difficult skills and techniques. The family called it the circular form, and after Chen Ching-ping was adopted through marriage by his wife's family in the town of Chaopao, it was also known as the chaopao form. This was the form he transmitted to Wu Yu-hsiang, who then initiated his own form, which we will call the Y.H. Wu style to distinguish it from the later Wu style of Wu Chien Chuan.

The Old Form Survives

Chen Wang-ting's original form, which was bigger, required more stretching and extending, and was much harder to perform was perpetuated by Chen Chang-hsing (1771–1853), also of the fifth generation after Chen Wang-ting. This was the form that was transmitted to Yang Lu-chan, who later developed his own style from it. But the old form also survived and was passed on through the generations to Chen Chang-hsing's great-grandson Chen Fa-ke (1887–

1957). It is said that he practiced thirty times a day when he first began to learn the art, and continued that commitment over a period of twenty years. His achievements were outstanding. In October of 1928, he was invited to teach in Peking. At the age of forty-one, he was still practicing twenty times a day. In his later teaching he exposed the original features of Chen's Tai-chi and finally allowed people outside the family to learn about the Chen style. In his old age, he revised the original first route slightly in an effort to popularize Chen's style.

Birth of the Yang Style

During the later years of the Ching dynasty, Yang Lu-chan was very well known in Peking, where he taught Tai-chi to members of the ruling class. In those days, Tai-chi was taught almost exclusively to aristocrats and the wealthy, but a new era for Tai-chi was beginning, a new direction for the art which paralleled changes taking place within China as a whole when the last dynasty fell in the Revolution of 1911 and the Republic of China was established.

As stated previously, Tai-chi was initially practiced solely for combat purposes such as self-defense and attack. Although Chen's martial art had undergone some simplification since the fifth generation after its synthesis, the form which Yang Lu-chan taught was the old form, and was much closer to the original. The members of the court and the royal family, however, were accustomed to living an easy life and reacted negatively to the difficulties of Chen's original form, which included fast and slow motion as well as leaping, jumping, and a motion known as "feet-quaking." Even while Yang was teaching the Emperor's Eight Banners Guards, the introduction of modern weapons was already changing the nature of combat in China. As a result of the factors contributing to this new climate of receptivity, Yang gradually began to place emphasis on Tai-chi as an art of health, rejuvenation, and longevity. Drawing both from his observations during his long teaching career and from his own experience, Yang Lu-chan slowly revised

the postures he had learned from Chen Chang-hsing into a form that most people would be able to practice in order to help them maintain good health. This new form combined the early concepts of self-defense and the later concepts of therapeutic exercise, signaling the birth of the Yang school.

Yang's Descendants Carry On

> In former times
> Who knew the art of Tai-chi?
> After it healed the revered Tang
> it became well known.
> And who could predict
> that the art of the Chens north of Henan
> would be popularized
> by the Yangs south of Hepei.

These words, taken from a longer work by martial art poet Yang Chi-tzu (1886–1965), tell us much of the history of Tai-chi, in a concise manner. We learn of the spread of the art from its place of origin, where credit is given to the Chen family. Equal credit is extended to the Yang family for bringing it to the people after the establishment of the Republic of China, and for changing people's ideas about Tai-chi so they began to see it as an art for health, rejuvenation, and healing. This view was especially strong after Tang Yen-kai, the first prime minister of the Republic of China, was cured of serious illness through his practice of Tai-chi.

Even within the context of changes going on in China as a whole, the actions of the Yang family, more than any other single factor, account for the availability and popularity of Tai-chi today. Yang Lu-chan had three sons. The oldest, Yang Chi, died when he was still a youth, leaving the younger sons, Yang Pan-hou and Yang Chien-hou to learn and carry on their famous father's art. Pan-hou, the second son, learned Tai-chi from his father when he was very young, and his achievements were exceptional. He also had the opportunity to study Tai-chi under Wu Yu-hsiang, and his literary studies included Wu's written works on

Tai-chi, as well as the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* by Wang Tsung-yu. Through these studies, his already remarkable skills and techniques became extraordinary. Unfortunately, he had an irritable and sometimes even violent temperament. He enjoyed knocking down his opponents, and was so skilled in free-hand techniques that as soon as he stretched out his hand, his opponents would not be able to stand. Some were thrown more than thirty feet. He was much too self-willed and would never show mercy to an opponent during combat. He also lacked patience, and even during practice with disciples and students, he would throw them roughly without exhibiting control. As a result, most of his disciples and students were afraid of him, and only a few received the benefits of the esoteric side of his techniques and skills and learned the advantages of his small postures. Among his students, one of the best was Chuan Yu (1834–1902), whose son Wu Chien-chuan (1870–1942) later developed a new style known as the Wu style of the small form.

At first, the skills and early achievements of Yang's third son Chien-hou were not as impressive as those of his brother, but his father disciplined him very strictly, and he usually practiced Tai-chi all day long. At last he reached a high level of skill. His distinguishing achievement was his ability to harmonize firmness and softness—his soft and hard *jing* were a truly perfect combination. He later taught Tai-chi with his father in Peking, and had many students as a result of his good temperament. People liked to call him Master Number Three. He taught three different kinds of postures: higher, middle, and lower.

Yang Chien-hou in turn transmitted the family art to his two sons Yang Shao-hau (1862–1930) and Yang Cheng-fu (1883–1936). His eldest son Yang Shao-hau began to study Tai-chi at the age of seven. He was stubborn and unyielding, just like his uncle Yang Pan-hou, and in much the same way he achieved excellent technique in free-hand combat and enjoyed knocking down his opponents. While teaching Joint Hands, he would attack as soon as he began to move his

hands. Most students could not stand this treatment, and only a few remained to learn from him. His style was small and firm, his postures low and brisk. His movements were swift and powerful, and he sought compactness in each movement. Unfortunately, he did not wish to teach his art to many students. Later, after the establishment of the Republic of China, he was invited to teach Tai-chi at the Peking Physical Education Institute. While there, he taught the big form.

Yang Cheng-fu Develops the Modern Yang Style

Unlike his brother, Yang Chien-hou's younger son Yang Cheng-fu was not fond of Tai-chi as a child. Later, however, he realized that Tai-chi could improve the health and arouse the national spirit of the Chinese people, so he took the initiative for introducing and popularizing the art all over China in the 1920s and 1930s. Yang Cheng-fu began to practice Tai-chi under his father's instruction at the age of twenty, but did not pursue his studies with diligence. In his mid-thirties, after the death of his father, he suddenly realized his responsibility and began to study and practice assiduously, day and night. Eventually he gained an understanding of the essence and techniques of Tai-chi, as well as a far-reaching reputation for having the highly-valued "body like iron wrapped in cotton." Later Yang Cheng-fu spent a great deal of time perfecting movements and revising postures. His style has gradually become the most popular style practiced today. It can be described as slow, even, soft, and relaxing, emphasizing the therapeutic effects of Tai-chi. It is known as the Yang style, or the big style, to distinguish it from the Wu style, or the small style. The translations of the classics in Part IV include his work, *A Discourse on How to Practice Tai-chi Chuan.*

Wu Chien-chuan Continues the Evolution of Tai-chi

Wu Chien-chuan's father Chuan Yu was Manchurian, a native of Tashing County in Hepei Province. After the fall of the Manchurian Ching dynasty and

the establishment of the Republic of China, his son adopted the surname Wu from the Han nationality.

Chuan-yu first learned Yang's big form of Tai-chi from Yang Lu-chan when Yang came to Peking to teach the emperor's guards. Chuan-yu's Tai-chi was well known for its softness and subtleness, and he was exceptionally skilled in neutralizing other people's invading force. Because of his skill in development of the highest stage of soft energy (also called transformational energy, or *hua* in Chinese), he is considered to have been Yang's best student among those who were not family members. Later, he also learned Yang's small form from Yang Pan-hou. It was this small form that he transmitted to his son Wu Chien-chuan who, as he grew up, put all his energy into studying and practicing.

In 1912, shortly after the establishment of the Republic of China, Hsu Yu-seng, a student of Yang Lu-chan, founded the Peking Physical Education Institute. Later he invited Wu Chien-chuan (who in 1914 became an officer and an instructor of the Presidential Guard), along with Yang Shao-hou and Yang Cheng-fu, to teach at the institute. There, the Yang brothers taught the big form and Wu taught the small form. Both forms underwent revision several times until at last Tai-chi became a continuous, even flow of movements without leaping and jumping, and therefore suitable for people of all ages. This streamlined form placed more emphasis on the healing and rejuvenating aspects of Tai-chi, in addition to the aim of longevity. From that time on these two types of Tai-chi—the big form and the small form—became well known to the people of China. Following this, the Yang family stopped teaching the small form. Wu Chien-chuan continued to teach, and after various refinements and improvements, finally established his own style.

In 1928, Wu moved from Peking to Shanghai, where he was concurrently a trustee of the Shanghai Martial Arts Academy, the Dean of the Wu-Tang School and an instructor at Ching-Wu Physical Education Association. When he was sixty he re-

mained as strong as a young man, and one could not tell by looking at him that he had extraordinary athletic ability.

Wu Chien-chuan continuously developed the art handed down from his father. He took off repetitive movements, as well as leaping and jumping movements, developing his family style into a more soft, even, rhythmic, and flowing style that was in strict accordance with the theories of yin and yang. Thus it became his own style, and has been handed down as such ever since. In 1935, at the age of sixty-five, he founded the Chien-chuan Tai-chi Chuan Association in Shanghai. Many students followed him and learned from him, and he was known as a teacher who withheld no secrets from his students. He had two sons, Wu Kung-yi (1901–72) and Wu Kung-chao (1903–84), who spread the family art to Hong Kong and Indochina. His daughter Wu Ying-hua is still living in Shanghai, and at the age of eighty-seven is currently director of the association her father founded. Her husband, the famous Wu stylist Ma Yueh-liang, is vice director of the association.

The Wu style is unmatched in its calmness and peacefulness. The movements are natural and graceful, and emphasis is put on following the rules. Although it is a small style, it has its foundations in the big style. It employs spreading but not stretching; compacting but still extending without restraint. The Wu style also represents a complete shift from the older styles in terms of energy development. In the original Chen style, the production of hard energy is followed by the production of soft energy only after a student's hard energy is fully developed. One of the major deviations that mark the Yang style as separate from the Chen style is that although soft energy is still produced from hard, there is strong emphasis on the simultaneous cultivation of soft energy. Alternately, the Wu style emphasizes development of soft energy and the production of hard energy from soft. This is especially important to the healing aspect of the art, which may partly account for Wu Chien-chuan having gained a reputation as a healer. In general, the Wu

style also features higher stances than the others, a point which can be especially appreciated by Western practitioners whose knees are usually not as flexible as those of most Orientals. (Squat positions are more endemic to daily life in the Orient.) Wu Chien-chuan's *Six Key Elements of Practicing Tai-chi Chuan* is included in the translations of the classics in Part IV.

CHAPTER

6

Development and Current Styles

THROUGHOUT the first century and a half of its existence, Tai-chi was taught and practiced as a martial art, and the focus of its development was on fighting skills. In the hundred-year period of development which followed, emphasis shifted until it was almost equally divided between Tai-chi's value as a martial art and its therapeutic aspects. The beginning of that era corresponded with Yang Lu-chan's return to Yungnien and his teaching of Tai-chi outside of Chen Chia Kou for the first time. After he taught in Peking, the benefits derived from Tai-chi for health preservation, rejuvenation, and healing became more obvious, and its popularity grew. By the middle of the twentieth century, the average person in mainland China knew of only two styles of Tai-chi—Yang Cheng-fu's big style and Wu Chien-chuan's small style. This familiarity resulted mainly from the fact that Yang Cheng-fu and Wu Chien-chuan taught at the Peking Physical Education Institute. Most people were not aware that there was another earlier Wu style, a Sung style, or even an original Chen style. This was because they were still only practiced in their respective villages, with the family keeping up old traditions and rarely passing their secrets on to anyone outside of the family. However, after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in

1949, in an effort to explore and preserve the legacy of traditional culture, the government encouraged them to share their different styles of Tai-chi with the people.

At present there are seven major distinguishable styles of Tai-chi, but keep in mind that there is really only one original Tai-chi—Chen's Old form. Chen's new form and its circular form; Wu Yu-hsiang's style and its derivative Sung style; Yang's style, and Wu Chien-chuan's style all descended from Chen's original first route. The many different styles are merely variations on the original. Some leave out difficult postures, while others employ variations of the fundamental movements. Although the forms are different, the process and structure of all of them follow the first route of the old form (The Thirteen Positions of the Chen family). The principal difference is that the original first route contains motions such as jumping, leaping, scurrying, bouncing, discharging, and feet-quaking. It is difficult for weak or elderly people to perform these movements. They have gradually been cut out of all the new forms, making them more suitable for healing and for maintaining health.

Based on the size of the postures, the major styles can be classified into three categories:

1. The Big Style:
   Chen's style and Yang's style.
   It employs more stretching and extending, and is more stable and steady.
2. The Medium Style:
   Wu Chien-chuan's style.
   It is moderate, neither big nor small, emphasizing softness, central equilibrium, and cultivation of transformational energy for self-healing as well as yielding in Push Hands.
3. The Small Style:
   Wu Yu-hsiang's and Sung's style.
   It is small and compact.
   The steps are more nimble, the body more agile.

Special features emphasized by each style also serve to differentiate them. Chen's style harmonizes hardness with softness and combines quickness with slowness; Wu Yu-hsiang's style is agile, nimble, light, and fast. Sung's style is very similar, while Yang's style is slow and even, stretching and steady. Wu Chien-chuan's style is soft, compact, moderate, and graceful.

In recent decades, the evolution of Tai-chi has continued, with the aim of making it more accessible to a greater number of people. Around 1949, a short form of Yang's style was devised. Yang Cheng-fu's student Cheng Man-ching simplified the style and established a form with only thirty-seven postures. In 1956, the National Physical Education Committee of the People's Republic of China selected twenty postures from the thirty-four basic postures of the Yang Style, taking out the more difficult postures and repeating others to compile an official simplified style. Again in 1957, the National Physical Education Committee selected eighty-eight postures out of the 108 postures of the complete long form of the Yang style to compile a standard form. There has also been the inevitable blending of styles as individuals who have learned more than one style combine aspects of each into a new form based on their personal experience. As Tai-chi continues to make its way to the West and other areas of the world, the process of change will no doubt go on, and there is conceivably still more to be learned about, as well as from, this art. The tradition of Tai-chi has always been for those with great insight to share what they have realized and to incorporate these valuable new aspects into the art. We may conclude that as long as the variations follow the original process and structure, practitioners will benefit.

The Art of Push Hands

In the early days, Push Hands was called Joint Hands, Scrap Hands, or Strike Hands, and four out of its eight techniques were well-founded in the postures of Grasping Sparrow's Tail. Push Hands was essentially a sport, but a very purposeful one—it was a

method of practicing with bare hands the techniques of ward-off, roll back, press, and push; pull, split, elbow strike, and shoulder force. In this phase of learning, the Tai-chi practitioners came to know the magnitude, direction, and momentum of an opponent's force simply by feeling it. This sensitivity combined with the eight techniques listed above and the additional techniques of seizing, holding, falling, and casting gave practitioners of Tai-chi an edge over other martial artists. Wang Tsung-yu's treatise is a summary of Push Hands. It was an integral part of Tai-chi to be practiced along with the postures, because skill in Push Hands depended on the correct performance of the postures. Thus, it aided practitioners in knowing whether or not their postures were correct, and fostered development of skills that gave rise to the following description of the Tai-chi practitioner in one of the classics: "Your opponent is unable to know your intention, but you know his before he moves."

The art of Push Hands, as well as that of the Tai-chi weapon skills has survived to the present, but because both of these aspects of the art have undergone less of an evolution, they enjoy less popularity. The weapon skills—there are eighteen varieties including sword, sabre, knife (broadsword), staff, and bull whip—are known by comparatively few and are used mainly for exhibition purposes. In the last hundred years of the development of Tai-chi, the emphasis has shifted more toward its health, rejuvenation, and longevity aspects. Push Hands has developed into more of a sport and contest art. But it is still considered by knowledgeable masters to be an essential aspect of learning and practicing as a complement to the form.

Push Hands can be likened to a laboratory where methods are explored and skills are perfected. Properly performed, Push Hands, like the postures, promotes the relaxation of the muscles and loosening and flexibility of the joints. Because it is practiced with a partner—an opponent, actually—the joints are stretched in a way that solo practice cannot duplicate. In addition, Push Hands cultivates sensitivity and

inner feeling throughout the whole body, which in turn enhances the flow of vital energy, all of which is as important in defending against disease and for therapeutic purposes as it is in repelling a human assailant. When the practitioner reaches a certain level during Push Hands, all his movements come out naturally, automatically coinciding with various postures. In other words, Push Hands is actually the application of different postures in different situations. Reaching this level, your postures have already become habit, or a part of your being. For these reasons the Tai-chi practitioner must learn the techniques of Push Hands if he or she wants to receive the full benefits of the rejuvenating and healing qualities of the art.

PART

III

The Condensed Form of Wu-Style Tai-chi

CHAPTER

7

Unique Features

Origins of the Style

Before working on this how-to section, I studied one of the Tai-chi classics, *The Postures of the Thirteen Positions,* which recorded the original movements of Tai-chi that were handed down by Master Wang Tsung-yu about two-hundred years ago. I compared this classic with the contemporary long form of Wu-style Tai-chi, which originated from Master Wu Chien-chuan. From these materials, I developed a shorter form consisting of thirty-six postures. These thirty-six postures closely follow the complete sequence of the postures of the Thirteen Positions and the complete long form of the Wu style. The thirty-six postures can be divided into three sections. Each section retains its unique character, and every section is performed in preparation for the next. It is actually a condensed form rather than a simplified form, with changes in order and the elimination of some postures. Therefore, I prefer to call it the Condensed Form of Wu-style Tai-chi.

In this how-to section, I will introduce the postures of my revered teacher, Master Chang Ta-chuan (1889–1969), who was Chinese-Manchurian like the Wu family. Master Chang studied Tai-chi under Master Wu Chuan-yu, who was the father of Master

Wu Chien-chuan and the originator of Wu-style Tai-chi. He also practiced Tai-chi with Master Wu Chien-chuan. Master Chang was named Ta-chuan, which means reaching *(ta)* the level of Master Wu Chien *(chuan)*. In 1987, I received a letter from Master Ma Yu-liang, Master Wu Chien-chuan's son-in-law. In this letter, he told me that Master Wu Chien-chuan's mother had also taught Tai-chi to Master Chang. In the 1950s, Master Chang was the most well known, proficient master of Push Hands on the east coast of mainland China.

The postures I am going to present in this book are a private form of Master Chang. This form has folds and alternations, which I call edges and corners. My master never revealed this form to the public, he only practiced it at home with his daughter. Throughout the history of Tai-chi, it has been a tradition that techniques and skills are not readily shown to those outside of the family or the inner circle. Even while the family is practicing, no outsiders are allowed to watch. At first, the Chen family (the originators of Tai-chi) regarded Tai-chi as their own family treasure. The teachings were passed on from father to son, from generation to generation. Later, the three generations of Yang masters, Yang Lu-chan (1799–1872), Yang Pan-hou (1837–92), and Yang Shao-hou (1862–1930) rarely transmitted the secrets of their techniques and skills to outsiders. After the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, when competent masters were encouraged to share their experiences with the public and were invited to teach at the government institute, what they taught in classes was still different from what they practiced in their own houses. My master told me that Master Yang Shao-hou, the grandson of Master Yang Lu-chan, possessed extraordinary skill. His style was small but firm, his postures low but brisk, his movements swift and powerful. He sought to be compact in each movement. Apparently, he did not wish to teach his art to many students. In the 1910s, he was invited to teach at the Peking Physical Education Institute, and while there, he only taught the big form of Tai-chi. He

reserved the small form for his own family and inner circle. Fortunately, there were still a few very serious students who retained the esoteric side of his excellent techniques and skills, learning the advantages of his small postures. Among these students, one of the best was Wu Chuan-you. He transmitted this Small form to his son, Wu Chien-chuan. It was because the Yang family stopped teaching the small form that Master Wu Chien-chuan continued to teach. He gradually refined and improved it so the general public could practice, establishing his own style. Before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, most people in mainland China were only aware of two styles of Tai-chi, the big style and the small style. They referred to the big style as the Yang style and the small style as the Wu style. Only a few knew that both the big style and the small style belonged to the Yang family, with the small style being kept as a private form of their own.

Healing Power

This is an easier and safer form for the Westerner to practice. The condensed form follows the tradition of the Wu style, which stresses the cultivation and development of soft internal energy, or *chi,* for self-healing. Master Wu Chien-chuan, the founder of the Wu style, followed the Tai-chi principle of "softness over hardness." He felt that soft internal energy was the most effective energy for self-healing and making a weak constitution strong. From the very beginning, he emphasized the cultivation and development of healing energy. For this reason, the Wu style has gained a tremendous reputation as a healing exercise. According to Chinese tradition, all healers and body workers usually practice at least three years of Taoist meditation (Chi-kung) and Tai-chi in order to cultivate, accumulate, and purify their own *chi,* because a healer must heal himself first.

The stance of Wu-style Tai-chi is higher and its steps are smaller. It emphasizes relaxation of the mind and healing of the body. This puts less stress on the legs and the knees. There are also no awkward twisting

motions of the waist and joints, and therefore no pain. As a result, the movements are much easier and safer for the Westerner to learn and practice, regardless of age or physical condition.

Focus Is on Internal Energy

This condensed form requires the learner to relax the outer layer of muscle and focus consciously on the movements of the joints. In this text, we constantly instruct the reader to move from the joints. For instance, "raise arms forward to shoulder level by rotating shoulder joints," "turn pelvis and body to front by rotating right hip joint," and "gradually lift pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis slightly forward." This unique feature, coordinated with graceful slow motion and smooth and gentle belly breathing, helps the beginner to enter into a meditative mood more easily, concentrating but relaxing at the same time. All stress and pressure vanish, and worries disappear.

Tai-chi is an internal system of exercise. Almost all Western exercises are external systems which use the outer layer of muscle to perform movements. They are strenuous, and require large amounts of energy. When people get old, they cannot continue performing these exercises. Practicing Tai-chi, however, teaches one to use the inner layer of muscles to perform movements slowly and gently, recharging energy through deep and gentle breathing. For this reason, people who have been tired or depressed become energetic and uplifted after practicing Tai-chi. Through slow motion and deep breathing, Tai-chi helps people to develop internal energy, *chi,* and internal strength, *jing.* These are of primary importance in maintaining health and vitality. Originally, Tai-chi was a martial art designed mainly for self-defense, but people have neglected the importance of practicing it as a defense against disease. If you are not healthy and energetic, how can you become an expert in the martial arts? Because Tai-chi possesses a unique healing power and the potential for rejuvenation, it is not unusual to see people over eighty years

old who are still in excellent health after spending years practicing Tai-chi.

Compact, Brisk Movements

All the movements are compact and brisk, emphasizing further development of intuitive feeling and cultivation of transformational energy *(hau-jing)*. Wu-style Tai-chi is not only easier for beginners to learn and practice, it is also good for advanced students who will be able to reap further benefit from Push Hands. First, the movements of the Wu style are compact and brisk, emphasizing feeling. It is difficult for an opponent to feel your movements. Concurrently, it is easier for you to feel your opponent's movements—the capacity of his energy, its strength and direction. This conforms to a teaching in the classics that says, "Your combatant cannot perceive your intention, but you can always predict his." Because all movements are compact and brisk, it is easier for you to move and stop swiftly. This follows the indication of the classics, "If your opponent does not move, you should not move. At his slightest move; you should move earlier than he." Furthermore, the Wu style specializes in transformational energy, the highest level of soft energy. The *Chant of Tai-chi Chuan Push Hands* says, "Let him attack with tremendous force; exert four ounces to deflect a thousand pounds. Entice him to advance and fall empty; then, simultaneously 'close' and 'release.'" In order to entice him to advance and fall empty, transformational energy must be used. It is said that Master Wu Chien-chuan was superior in transformational Kung-fu. When Master Wu taught Push Hands, he only allowed his students to yield in the first stage, never to resist. He asked his students to yield as much as they could, fully accepting their partner's steady intrusion. Only when his students had exhausted their full capacity to yield did Master Wu allow them to follow their partner's momentum and change its direction. Following the momentum and changing the direction would cause the partner to fall empty. This was never achieved through resistance or any form of

exertion. It is the highest stage of "softness over hardness." After mastering the small form of Tai-chi, it is easier to gain an advantage by using proper timing and proper positioning. The classics say, "You must seek to stretch and expand, then to contract and compact; only then will your movements be meticulous and delicate."

Movements with Edges and Corners

I still remember when my master's only daughter came to class during a New Year holiday in the late 1950s while home from work in another province. As we had not seen her practice Tai-chi for over five years, we asked her to demonstrate for us. Out of habit, she demonstrated her family style with edges and corners in her postures. We were both surprised and confused. Almost everyone in China who was familiar with Tai-chi knew that its movements should be round, and that all the round movements should be continuous and smooth. After class, Master Chang asked my opinion. I told him, "I love it and want to learn and practice it." He smiled and asked again, "Why are all the other students confused, but you are so sure?" I answered, "The classics say, 'Seek the straight from the curved.' They also say, 'Turning back and forth, there must be folds and alternations. Advancing and retreating, there must be rotation and variation.' Sister's postures embodied the essence of the classics. Before watching her postures, I could not comprehend how we could seek the straight from the curved. Now I am instantly enlightened." My master burst into laughter and said, "But everyone knows that Tai-chi movements should be round and smooth." I said, "According to my knowledge of geometry, all curves are made of numerous tiny segments of straight lines." I found a piece of paper, put three points on it, and said, "If you want me to draw an accurate round curve, you must give me at least three points. The more points you give me, the rounder and more accurate the curve will be." While I was speaking, I demonstrated on the piece of paper. I said again, "Sister's postures have edges and corners; each

edge or corner is a point on the curve of movement. The more edges and corners there are, the more accurate the curving movement will be. Furthermore, each point of the edge or corner in the curve of movement serves as a point of tangency to the curve. From that point, we release our intrinsic energy." My master burst into a hearty laugh and said, "You know the secret!"

Body Is Kept in a Straight Line

The body is always kept in a straight line, not only in upright positions (i.e. Single Whip), but also in slanting positions (i.e. Slanting Fly), and in positions which involve leaning forward or inclining backward (i.e. Brush Knee and Twist Step, or Backward Repulse Monkey). It is said in the classics, "Let no part of the motion show any deficiency, nor any posture appear concave or convex." For example, in the Wu style and in this condensed form, there are Bow-and-Arrow Steps in which one leg is always straight when the other one is bent. The Bow-and-Arrow Step not only reflects the essence of yin and yang, that of bending and straightening, but also embodies the saying in one of the classics, "Motion (or *jing*, intrinsic strength) is rooted in the foot, sprouted through the leg, governed at the waist, and manifested in the fingers. From the foot, through the leg, up to the waist; all should be coordinated harmoniously in an integrated whole." In the explanations in this book, I always remind you to imagine and feel a slanting straight line extending from the back heel, through the leg and body, to the top of the head while you perform the Bow-and-Arrow Step. Why should the body be kept in a straight line, even in postures that lean forward or incline backward? If a rod is thrust into the ground, it will never break as long as it stays straight. This is also true of intrinsic strength. The classics say, "*Jing* should originate from the heel and move through the leg." Only if your body is straight can the *jing* be transmitted from the foot, to the leg, up through the waist, and all the way to the fingers without hindrance. You must "store the *jing* as if

drawing a bow, and release it as if discharging an arrow." In the Bow-and-Arrow Step, we store energy in the bent leg. While releasing the *jing,* we straighten the bent leg from the heel and simultaneously bend the straightened leg. While we are doing this, we are putting into effect what the classics say, "Seek straightness from the curved; reserve before releasing." This is one of the keys to discharging energy.

Central Equilibrium Is Maintained

Before or after leaning forward or inclining backward, the body is immediately brought upright. The classics say, "Turning back and forth, there must be folds and alternations." This bring-your-body-upright movement associated with leaning forward or inclining backward is the folding or alternation of the body while turning back and forth. We call this movement 'neutralization.' The classics say, "When poising your body, you must be perfectly erect and remain balanced and pliable, responding to the Eight Directions. No leaning, no inclining. Constantly maintain the central equilibrium." No leaning, no inclining does not mean we should avoid any leaning or inclination of the body, but rather that soon after we lean forward or incline backward we should immediately return to a perfectly erect position and maintain the central equilibrium. In this condensed form, the neutralizing movement becomes a part of leaning forward or inclining backward. They are closely connected, making an integrated whole. Only in this way are we able to suddenly appear and suddenly disappear. The classics say, "Stand still like a balanced scale, move freely like a whirling wheel . . . *chi,* the intrinsic energy, resembles the wheel; the lumbar of the lower back, the axis. If your body is touched, you are able to revolve freely. You will be performing with the utmost efficiency." Only when your lumbar is as erect and straight as an axis is your body capable of revolving freely.

Source of Movement Is in Pelvis

This might be a secret that has never been exposed

to the public. The classics say, "The source of intention is in the waist" or "Motion is governed from the waist." Based on my experience, the waist should include the pelvis. Also in the classics is the recommendation to "Take heed of the waist in every movement, completely relax the abdomen and let the *chi* seethe." It seems that the classics consider the waist and the abdomen as a whole. One of the classics says, "The thirteen general positions should never be scorned. The source of intention is in the waist." The waist here, in Chinese, actually consists of two characters. These characters, *yao-hsi,* are often translated as the single word "waist." Literally, *yao-hsi* means "waist" *(yao)* and "crack" *(hsi).* In my opinion, "crack" refers to where the body bends. Thus, this "crack in the waist" might be the hip joint. After years of unceasing and diligent practice coupled with careful and thorough examination, the competent masters probably knew this secret. An examination of our body structure shows that the pelvic girdle is heavy and stable in comparison to the shoulder girdle. The pelvis is of great importance for structural balance, because it is the location of the body's center of gravity. Mechanically, the pelvic girdle is not as flexible as the shoulder girdle. To increase the range of its movement, the pelvis should move as a whole and rotate at only one hip joint on the femoral head. The femur, or thigh bone, is the longest, heaviest, and strongest bone of the skeleton.

The classics say, "Keeping your weight sunk on one side, you can move freely and at will. By distributing your weight on both feet, you become double-weighted and stagnant . . . one frequently sees people who have spent years of painstaking practice and still are unable to neutralize an attacking force. They are always controlled by their opponents. This is simply because they have not fully comprehended the fault of double-weightedness. To avoid this problem, you must distinguish yin from yang." Here, to distinguish yin from yang is to put your weight on one leg and move your pelvic girdle and body as a whole by rotating only one hip joint. Your movement will then

be as the classics say, "Above, the two arms move as a unit with the body. Below, the two legs follow the hips." Movement is a neuro-musculo-skeletal activity. The nervous system stimulates the muscles, and the muscles move the skeleton. This is why Tai-chi emphasizes using both mind and feeling. When the classics say that the source of intention is in the waist, this means that our intention should be in the region of the waist, specifically on the lumbar back, at an acupuncture point called The Gate of Life. This point is located just opposite the navel. The source of movement should be in the pelvic girdle, specifically on the hip joints. In this condensed form, whenever we bend our body, we bend the pelvis at the hip joints rather than bending the lumbar. Since the lumbar back is the weakest part of our skeletal structure (while the pelvis is the toughest), we protect it. Likewise, when we move the upper body, we move at the hip joints to carry the whole body.

Movements End Where They Begin

According to the philosophy and theory of Tai-chi, everything goes around and begins again. For instance, day and night replace each other alternately. If we perform this form properly, we will naturally go around and begin again, starting the movements at the same point over and over. For this reason, we perform Brush Knee and Twist Step two steps toward the left, Backward Repulse Monkey four steps toward the right, Cloud Hands two steps toward the left, and Trample and Punch two steps toward the right.

Brush Knee and Twist Step, Backward Repulse Monkey, and Trample and Punch are all Twist Steps. The Twist Step is the basic step of Tai-chi. Originally, it was designed to cultivate good balance and protect the groin. Backward Repulse Monkey is a backward Brush Knee and Twist Step. Once my master told me that when we practice Backward Repulse Monkey, we should *huan jing bu nao,* "return the sexual energy to nourish the brain." According to the theories of traditional Chinese medical science, *jing,* the sexual energy or creative energy, is the essence of life. When

we practice the movement of Backward Repulse Monkey we should send the sexual energy from the perineum to the coccyx, all the way through the spine, and up to the brain, using our breath to guide the energy. Additionally, experience shows that Twist Steps are among the best exercises for building a pair of solid, well-proportioned, beautiful legs.

Spiritual Aspect Is Accentuated

In my own way, I accentuate the spiritual aspect of Tai-chi and the unity of body, mind, and spirit. I am interested in Tai-chi as a means of spiritual growth in a materialistic world. For this reason, I have added some very graceful, spiritual movements at the beginning and end of the how-to section such as Lift Spirit, Meditate With Heart, and Bow with Thanksgiving. They have become quite popular. When we practice Tai-chi, we need to lift our spirits, meditate with our hearts, and give thanks for our lives. Physically, we need some exercises that raise our arms and hands above our heads and bend us forward at our hip joints. When practicing Tai-chi, we cultivate and store up within ourselves the imperishable, vast, and mighty energy that exists between heaven and earth. According to the classics, "Tai-chi comes from Wu-chi; it is the mother of yin and yang. In motion, yin and yang differentiate; in stillness, they integrate." Here, Wu-chi means "growing out of nothing." (*chi* here in Chinese Mandarin is pronounced "ji" and means "extremities"; *chi* that means energy or breath is pronounced "chee.") In conjunction with this theory, I have named the starting posture Differentiation of Yin and Yang, and the closing posture Integration of Yin and Yang.

According to the theory of yin and yang, everything has its form and essence; so it is with Tai-chi. The postures are the form; *chi, jing,* techniques, and skills are the essence. In China, people usually have their own bottle to buy wine. Analogously, learning the postures only secures you a bottle. After you have mastered the postures, you are able to fill them with techniques and skills. On the other hand, practicing

the postures is the basic exercise, while Push Hands is its application. Only through Push Hands are you able to examine whether or not your postures are correct. And Push Hands itself is a good exercise to help make your joints flexible by loosening muscles, ligaments, and tendons. Learning the postures is merely a means to an end. Unfortunately, most people have no patience to continue learning and practicing for years; they are satisfied to get an empty bottle without wine. In China, learning the form without the essence is called "empty form." How do you pour the essence into the form? First, you need a good bottle. That is, every posture should be posed according to the laws of body mechanics, and every movement should be practiced in harmony with gravity. You should always be able to maintain your central equilibrium and keep your body erect and balanced. In the very beginning, you cannot practice the postures in the proper manner. Your joints are not flexible enough; your muscles, ligaments, and tendons are too tight. The first step is to practice the postures in order to change your body. When your joints are flexible and your muscles, ligaments, and tendons are looser, your posture will naturally become proper.

Postures Possess Flesh and Bone

As I mentioned before, the small style of Tai-chi was a private form of the Yang family, and the form with edges and corners was a private form of my master's family. The condensed form I introduce here is derived directly from the private form of my master. My master once told me that in our form there were drafting tools, the compass and the triangle. Rotating on one femoral joint is like drawing a curve with a compass, straightening and bending the joint (or joints) is like making an angle with a triangle. My master said to me, "Learn the edges and corners, then smooth them into curves. Your postures will then possess flesh and bone. The edges and corners are the bones, the roundness is the flesh. After your postures are rounded and smoothed, the edges and corners

are still there. People can see the spirit and essence beyond your form."

It is with great happiness that I see Tai-chi becoming more and more popular in the West. I would like to share both my knowledge and my experience of Tai-chi with Westerners. It is an exercise which integrates a relaxed and focused mind, harmonious and coordinated movements, and deep, gentle breathing. It is impossible to mention all of the many aspects of Tai-chi in this book. Therefore, I'd rather stress how to learn and practice the form properly. After you have mastered the form, you will be capable of filling it with techniques and skills, as well as *chi* and *jing*. The classics say, "You must seek to stretch and expand, then contract and compact. Your movements will then be meticulous and delicate." For advanced students, this condensed form is a contracted and compact form of Tai-chi. When practicing Tai-chi, especially in the very beginning, you need to stretch and expand your postures gently and gradually. Thus, your joints will become more flexible, and your muscles, ligaments, and tendons will become looser. After all of these areas have been toned, you can gradually contract and compact your postures until they become meticulous and delicate.

I prefer to use short sentences to explain the postures, putting them on separate lines so that it will be easier to read them while performing the movements. I have tried to explain as much as I could in the clearest manner possible. When reading the text, you might feel bored after being reminded again and again that the pelvis and body remain upright, shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped, and eyes look to left. This boredom reveals that these refinements have been deeply impressed on your minds. They should become attributes of your postures.

CHAPTER

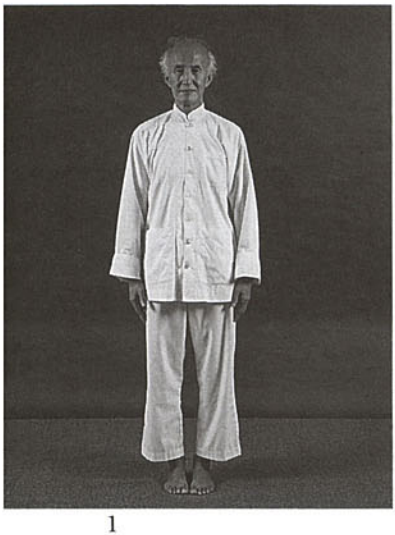
8

How to Practice Tai-chi

Standing in Stillness and Balance

- Stand in stillness with feet together (Fig. 1)
- Move left foot sideways, until feet are hips' width apart
- Point feet straight ahead
- Distribute weight evenly on balls and heels of feet
- Touch ten toes to the ground
- Look straight ahead
- Touch tongue to roof of mouth
- Quiet the mind
- Slow the breathing
- Pull kneecaps up
- Drop tailbone down
- Raise front of pelvis
- Stretch lowest ribs forward
- Lift collar bone
- Keep body upright, but not rigid
- Align head and neck with body
- Imagine a thread suspending head from above
- Sink shoulders
- Let arms and hands fall naturally at sides
- Keep elbows and knees straight, but not locked
- Feel sensation on finger tips
- Feel central axis of body aligned with gravity
- Breathe smoothly and naturally through the nose

You are now standing in stillness and balance.



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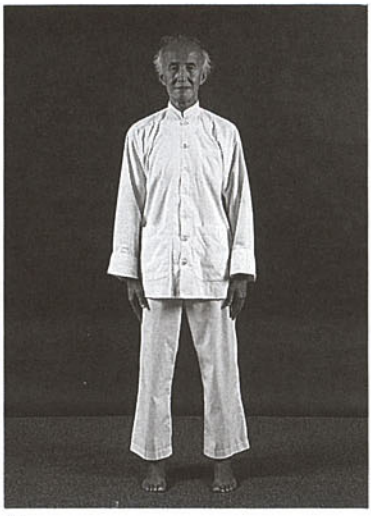

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3

Lift Spirit, Meditate with Heart

Throughout its history, Tai-chi has evolved from a martial art to a form of self-healing, rejuvenation, and spiritual growth. After we have mastered the postures, internal feelings can be experienced while practicing Tai-chi. For this reason, I invite the readers to practice the following movements called Lift Spirit, Meditate with Heart before practicing the condensed form of Wu-style Tai-chi.

LIFT SPIRIT

Raise Arms and Hands

* Stand in stillness and balance (Fig. 2)
* Gradually raise arms forward to shoulder level, with palms facing the ground by rotating shoulder joints (Fig. 3)

  While doing this:

  Inhale smoothly and naturally through the nose

  Imagine a thread tied to the fourth finger of each hand, lifting the arms from above

  Arms are straight, parallel to each other, shoulders' width apart

  Fingers are straight, slightly separated, and relaxed

* Continue to raise arms and hands forward above head (Fig. 4)
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes follow fingers as hands rise up
  Neck is gradually tilted back
* Raise arms and hands up for further extension by lifting shoulders, and gradually bring palms together overhead as though in prayer (Fig. 5)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes watch finger tips

REMEMBER:

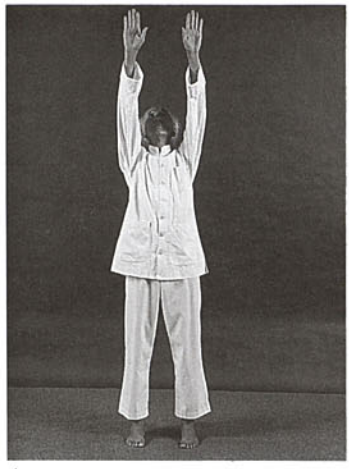
Always breathe through the nose.
Straight means extended, but not rigid.

Draw Hands Down

* Draw hands down slowly and vertically past the face and toward the heart by sinking shoulders and dropping hands until forearms are in a straight line and parallel to the ground (Fig. 6)
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally
  Palms remain together
  Eyes follow fingers as hands are drawn down until eyes look straight ahead
  Arms do not touch body

Bring Hands Up

* Bring hands up over head again (Fig. 7)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
  Hands remain together
  Eyes follow fingers as hands rise up
  Neck is gradually tilted back
* Turn palms away from each other (Fig. 8)
* Gradually spread arms and hands down sideways until they are at shoulder level, with palms facing the ground (Fig. 9)
* Continue to move arms and hands downward until they fall naturally at sides of body (Fig. 10)
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally



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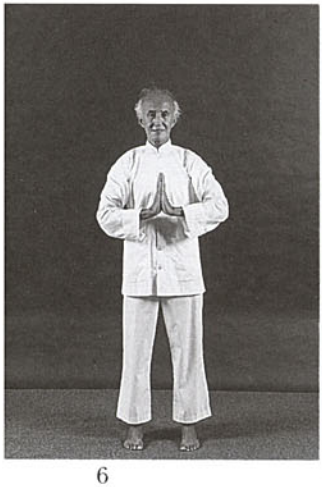

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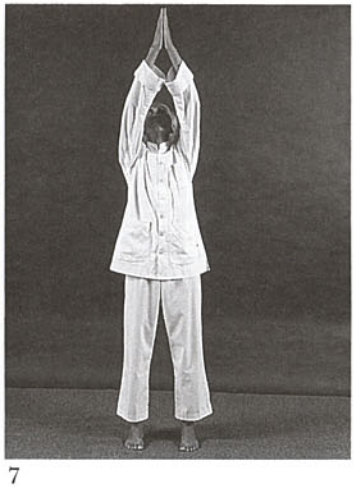

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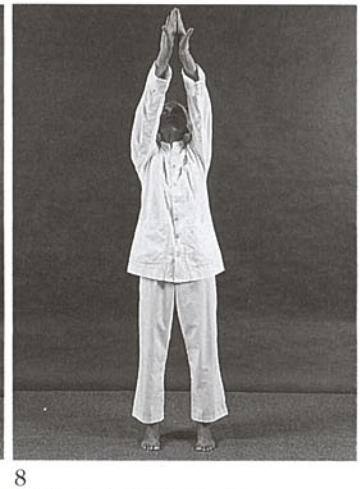

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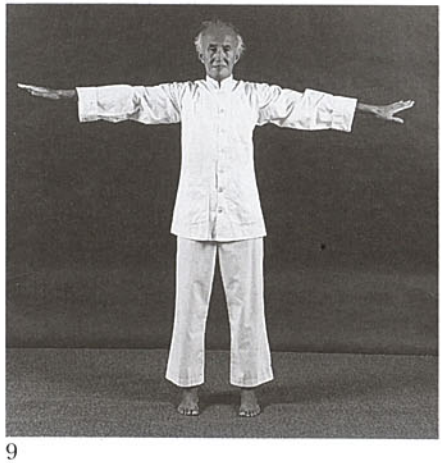

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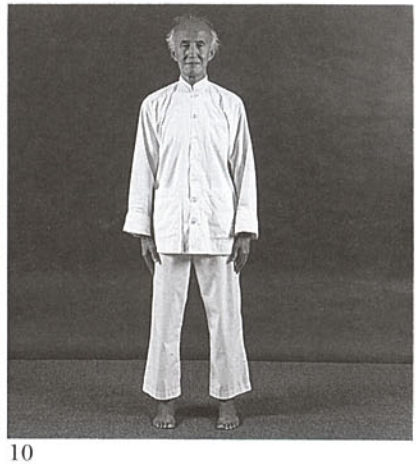

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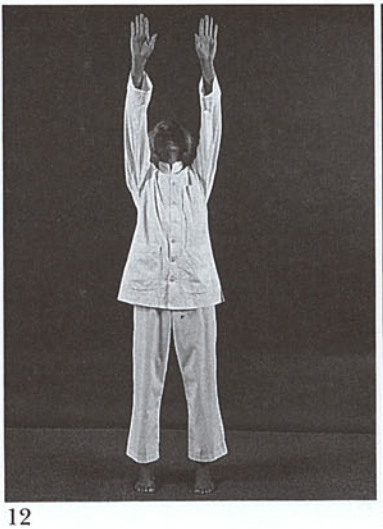

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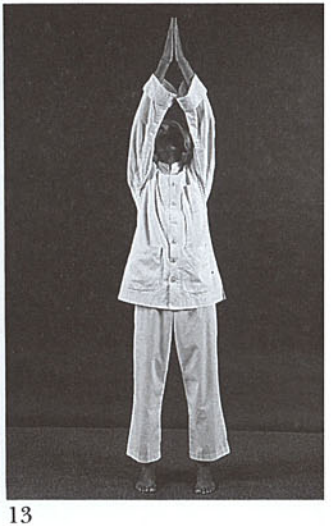


13

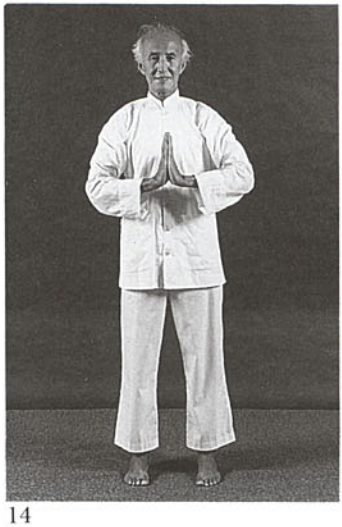
Arms move at shoulder joints
Eyes lower as arms are drawn down until they look straight ahead

Raise Arms and Hands Again

* Gradually raise arms forward to shoulder level (Fig. 11)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes look straight ahead
* Continue to raise arms and hands above head (Fig. 12)
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes follow fingers as hands raise up
  Neck is gradually tilted back
* Raise arms and hands up for further extension by lifting shoulders, and gradually bring hands together overhead as though in prayer (Fig. 13)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes watch fingertips

Draw Hands Down

* Draw hands down slowly and vertically past the face to the heart by sinking shoulders and dropping hands until forearms are in a straight line, parallel to the ground (Fig. 14)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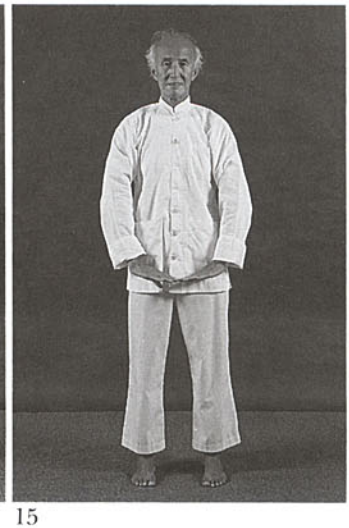
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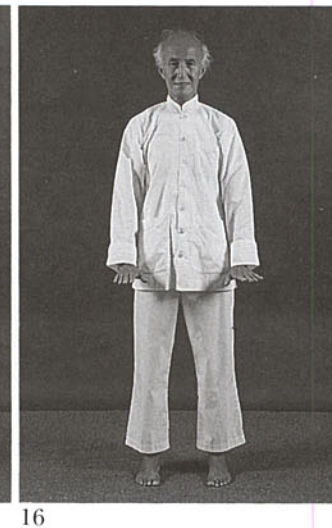
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While doing this:
Exhale smoothly and naturally
Palms remain together
Eyes follow fingers as hands are drawn down until eyes look straight ahead
Forearms are in a straight line, parallel to the ground
Arms do not touch the body

MEDITATE WITH HEART

* Keep palms together in front of the heart
* Feel peace in the mind and fullness in the heart
  While doing this:
  Inhale and exhale several times in a meditative mood

Return to Stillness and Balance

* Continue to draw hands down slowly and vertically until palms are in a straight line, parallel to the ground (Fig. 15)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
  Middle fingers remain touching
  Palms face down
  Hands do not touch body
  Eyes look straight ahead
* Gradually bring palms so they point to Front by rotating the shoulder joints (Fig. 16)

While doing this:

Exhale smoothly and naturally

Arms remain in position

Hands are bent, with palms parallel to the ground and facing down

Fingers point to Front

Eyes look straight ahead

Practice these movements several times, until you feel that your spirit is lifted and your heart is at peace.

You are now ready to practice the condensed form of Wu-style Tai-chi Chuan.

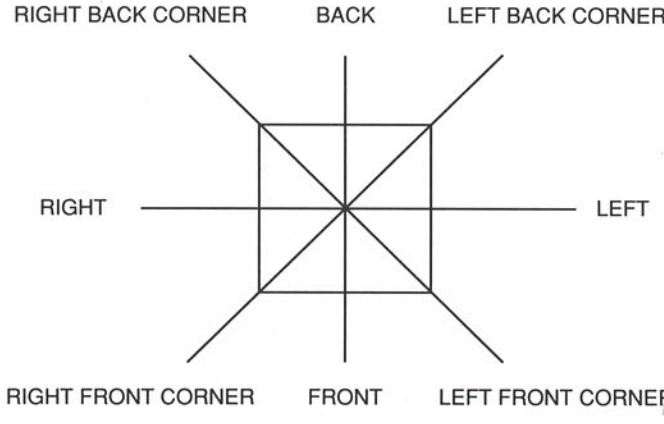
Key to the Directions

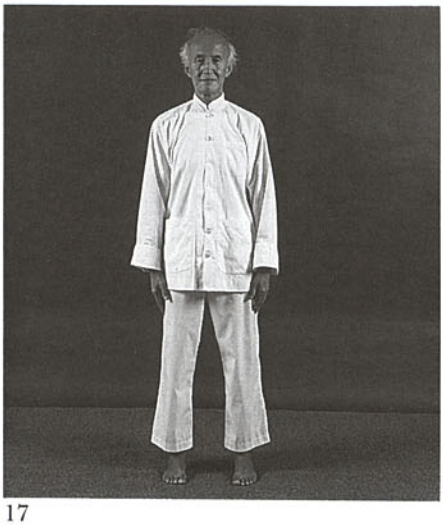
Eight directions are referred to in the text, as shown in the diagram. Imagine that they refer to the sides and corners of a square with you at the center. These directions are fixed from the very beginning and do not change throughout the movements. The directions are all capitalized in this book (e.g. Right, Right Front Corner, Back, etc.)

For instance, if the text says, "turn pelvis and body to Right," turn to the Right indicated on the diagram, not to *your* right with respect to your position at that moment.

Likewise, when you are facing the Right Back Corner, and the text says, "turn pelvis and body to Right Front Corner," turn to the Right Front Corner indicated on the diagram, not to the right front corner with respect to *your* body at that moment.

Most of the photographs were taken from the "Front" of the square. Those that were not are labeled with the direction where the camera was located.





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The 36 Postures of the Condensed Form of Wu-style Tai-chi

According to the philosophy and the theory of Tai-chi, "Everything goes around and begins again." This condensed form of Tai-chi is designed to end movements at the same place they start. If you perform the postures properly, you can go around and begin again, starting the movements at the same point over and over.

Section One

DIFFERENTIATION OF YIN AND YANG

Raise Arms

* Stand in stillness and balance, facing Front (Fig. 17)
* Relax shoulders
* Focus on shoulder joints and fourth fingers
* Raise arms forward to shoulder level by rotating shoulder joints (Fig. 18)

While doing this:

* Imagine arms and hands are being pulled up from above

19

Note: Shoulders are pulled slightly forward

While arms and hands are rising:

* Inhale smoothly and naturally

Note: Tongue touches roof of mouth
Body is upright
Arms and hands are straight, but not locked, pointing forward and shoulders' width apart
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Fingers are straight, slightly separated and relaxed
Eyes look to Front

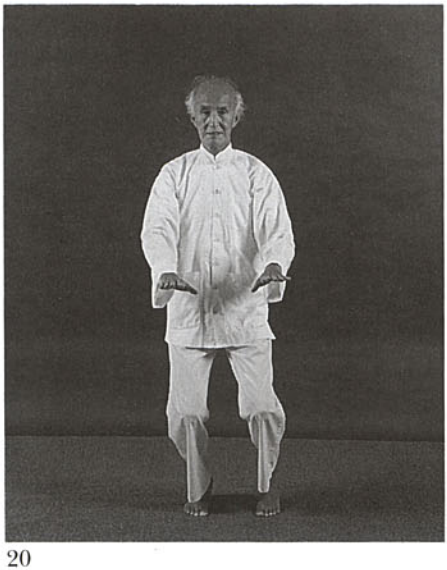
Draw Back Shoulders and Forearms (Fig. 19)*

* Draw forearms slightly toward body by drawing shoulders back
* Lower elbows and forearms until upper arms are at a forty-five-degree angle to body and forearms are parallel to each other and to the ground

While doing this:

* Exhale smoothly and naturally

* In cases where the figure reference follows a subtitle, the photo depicts all movements under that subtitle.



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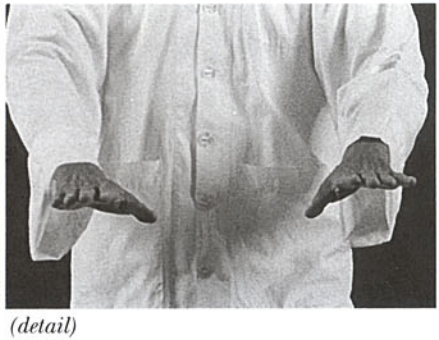


(detail)

Note: Body remains upright
Upper arms do not touch body
Forearms and hands are straight, shoulders' width apart
Palms face the ground
Fingers are straight, slightly separated and relaxed
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped

Bend Knees (Fig. 20)

* Bend right knee slowly by sinking weight onto right foot
  While bending right knee:
* Lift left heel by bending left knee until only your toes touch the ground
  While doing this:
  Feel buoyancy in the forearms, as if the body is sinking into water
  Upper body remains upright
  Both knees are bent
  Right knee is lower than left knee
  Weight rests on right foot

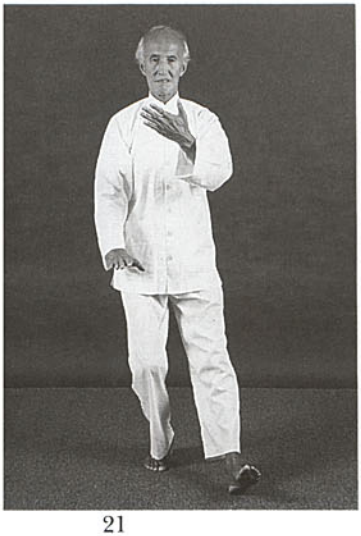
Practice these movements several times, until you feel buoyancy in the forearms.

POSTURE 1 : *Grasping Sparrow's Tail*

Grasping Sparrow's Tail is one of the treasures of the traditional Chinese martial arts. The original Tai-chi followed this tradition and put it at the very beginning of its postures. This set of postures contains some of the most important general principles of Tai-chi. Therefore, it is a little difficult to learn. After you are able to perform this set of postures, the rest of the movements will be much easier to learn. It can be regarded as an "entrance examination" to Tai-chi.

Transition: Bend Arms and Stretch Foot

* Gradually scoop left hand toward chest, arcing upward until hand is in front of neck and thumb is in front of nose, about ten inches away (Fig. 21)
  While doing this:
  Feel cosmic energy being scooped up by left palm and flowing through arm into body
  Keep left upper arm in position
  At the same time:
* Gradually slide left foot forward until knee straightens and heel touches the ground
  Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
  Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
  Left heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart
  Left toes point up
  Weight is on right foot
  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.
* Gradually turn pelvis and body to Right Front Corner by rotating right hip joint
  At the same time:
* Raise right arm straight forward to shoulder level, facing Right Front Corner, by rotating shoulder joint (Fig. 22)
  Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right Front Corner
  Left arm and hand stay in position
  Right arm and hand are straight, pointing to Right Front Corner
* Gradually turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint



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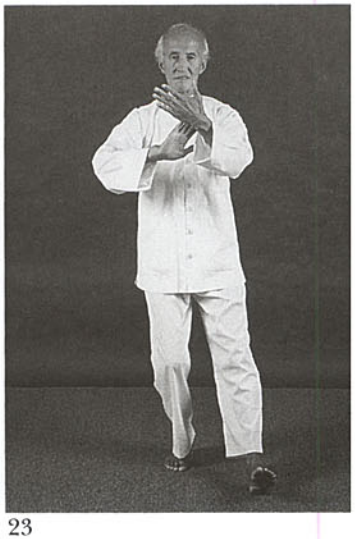

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At the same time:

✳ Bend right elbow until middle finger touches inside of left wrist (Fig. 23)

Note: Right upper arm stays in position

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front

Feet point to Front

Right knee is bent, left leg is straight

Right foot is flat on the ground

Left heel touches the ground, with toes pointing up

Left heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart

Hands are in front of upper chest, about ten inches away

Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm, with index finger and thumb even with chin

Right hand is bent at wrist, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist, and palm facing Front and down

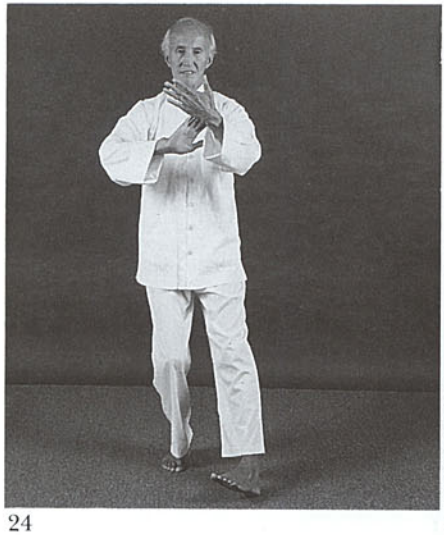
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped

Upper arms do not touch body

Weight is on right foot

Eyes watch left thumb

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.



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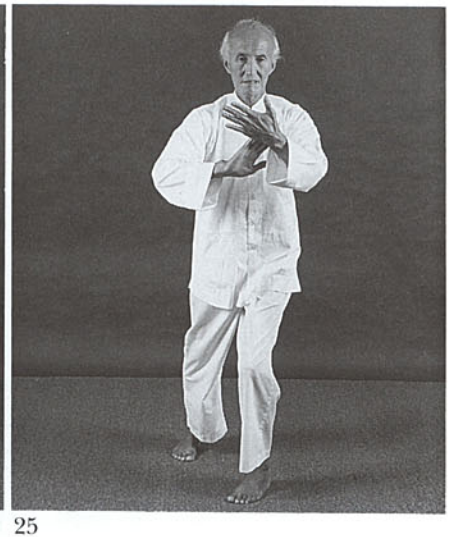

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Press Forward and Down

* Pivot clockwise on heel of left foot until toes point to Right Front Corner (Fig. 24)

  Note: Pelvis and body still face Front
  Left foot points to Right Front Corner

* Lower left toes and press forward by straightening right leg from heel (Fig. 25)

  Note: Arms remain in position

  At the same time:

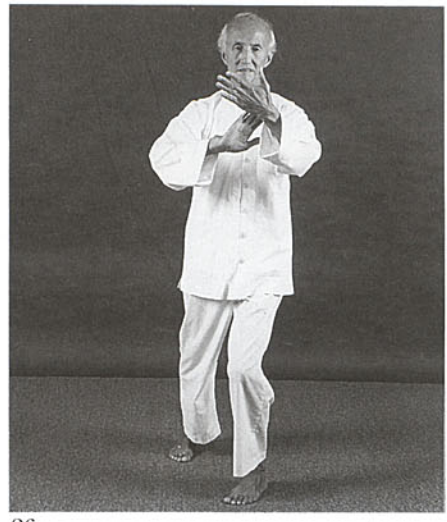
* Bend left knee until knee is above toes and weight is on left foot

  (When straightening the leg or bending the knee, always straighten the bent leg from the heel.)

  Note: Arms and hands will naturally press down without changing position with respect to the body

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Front
  Left foot points to Right Front Corner
  Right foot points to Front
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  An imaginary slanting straight line extends from the right heel through the leg and body to the top of the head
  Left knee is above left toes
  Right heel stays on the ground



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Both hands are at a forty-five-degree angle to the ground
Weight is on left foot
Eyes watch left thumb

✳ Gradually lift upper body upright by pushing pelvis forward (Fig. 26)

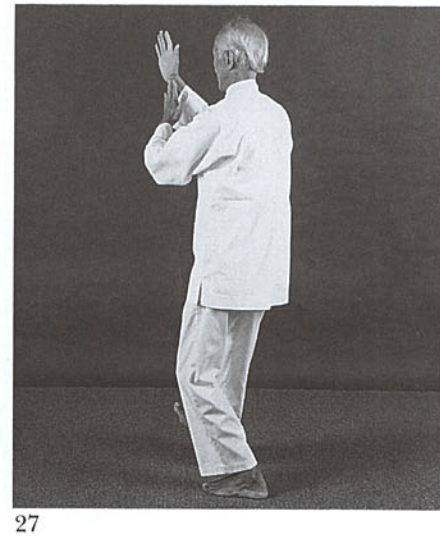
Note: Weight stays on left foot

While lifting body upright:

A sense of lifted spirits can be felt from right heel up to the top of the head
Pelvis and body are upright and facing Front
Hands remain in front of neck and chest
Right middle finger still touches inside of left wrist
Upper arms do not touch body
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes watch left thumb

REMEMBER:

- When the leg is bent, the knee is above the toes and the hip joint is above the heel.
- When one leg is bent, the other is straight. Weight is on the foot of the bent leg.
- When practicing Tai-chi, an internal sense of lifted spirit alternates with a feeling of looseness (i.e. yang alternates with yin).
- When shifting weight, always straighten the bent leg from the heel.



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Ward Off (Fig. 27)

* Lift right toes
* Turn pelvis and body clockwise to face Right Back Corner by rotating left hip joint

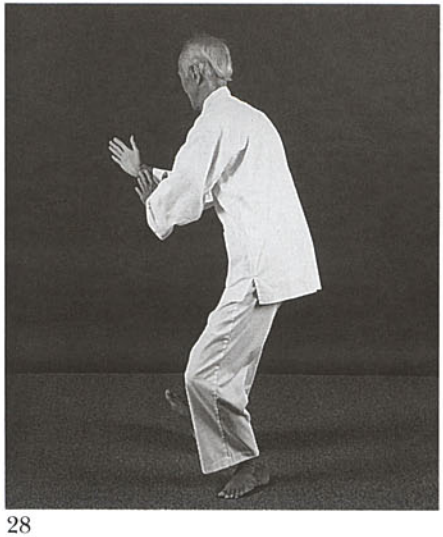
  Note: Pelvis and body are upright
  Weight remains on left foot
  Left hip joint is above left heel
  Right toes point up and toward Right Back Corner

  At the same time:
* Slide right hand up until hands cross at wrists

  Note: Fingers are straight
  Left hand and arm stay in position
* Slide right inside wrist across left thumb in a circular movement until right wrist touches left middle finger
* Rotate right hand counterclockwise until it is in a straight line with left hand

  While doing this:
  Think of the right hand as a rising and setting sun
  Follow right thumb with eyes

  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right Back Corner
  Left foot points to Right Front Corner
  Right foot points to Right Back Corner, with toes up
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  Hands are in front of the chest about ten inches away



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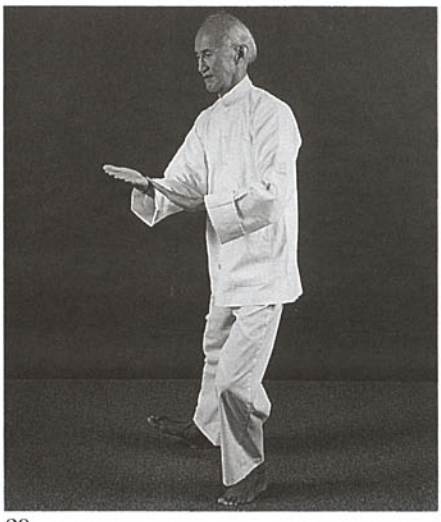

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Right wrist is at shoulder level
Right hand is straight, as an extension of the forearm
Right palm is facing Right Front Corner
Right thumb is in front of nose
Left wrist is bent
Left middle finger touches inside of right wrist
Left palm is facing Left Back Corner
Upper arms do not touch body
Eyes watch right thumb

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

Roll Back

* Lean pelvis and body forward slightly at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward. Continue bending until right forearm is parallel to the ground (Fig. 28)

  Note: Pelvis and body lean slightly forward in a straight line
  Arms and hands stay in position
  Eyes follow right thumb

* Turn pelvis and body counterclockwise to Right Front Corner by rotating left hip joint (Fig. 29)

  Note: Legs and feet stay in position

  At the same time:

* Rotate right forearm until right palm faces upward

✳ Rotate left forearm, until left palm faces downward

Note: Upper arms stay in position and naturally follow the movement of the turning body
Left middle finger still touches inside of right wrist
Right forearm is parallel to the ground
Upper arms do not touch body

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, leaning sideways toward Left Front Corner and facing Right Front Corner
An imaginary straight line extends from right heel through leg and right side of body to top of head
Left foot points to Right Front Corner
Right foot points to Right Back Corner with toes up
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Upper arms stay in position
Right forearm is parallel to the ground
Right wrist is in front of navel, about ten inches away
Right palm faces upward with fingers pointing to Right Front Corner
Left palm faces down with middle finger touching inside of right wrist
Eyes watch right hand

Press Sideways and Down—turn to Right (Fig. 30)

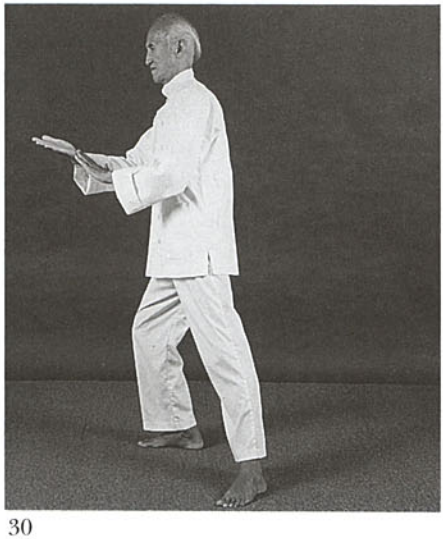
✳ Lower right toes to the ground and shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg from heel and bending right knee

While doing this:

A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from left heel up to top of head

When the above is completed:

Spine is straight, leaning sideways toward Back and facing Right
An imaginary slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and left side of body to top of head
Right foot points to Right Back Corner
Left foot points to Right Front Corner
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
Hands are in front of navel, about ten inches away
Right hand is straight as an extension of forearm with fingers pointing to Right Front Corner
Right hand will naturally be at a forty-five-degree angle to the ground without moving arms



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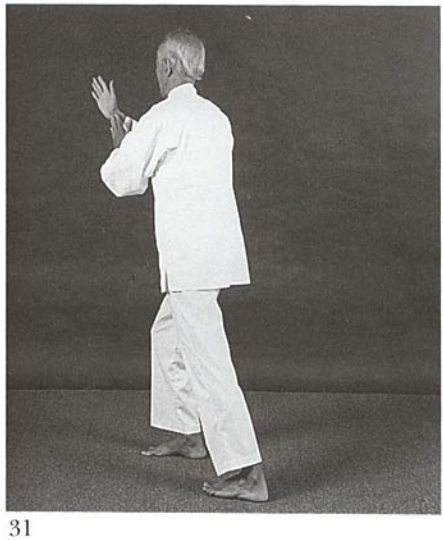

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Left wrist is bent, with left middle finger touching inside of right wrist and pointing to Right Back Corner
Eyes watch right hand

Ward Off—turn to Right Back Corner (Fig. 31)

* Turn pelvis and body clockwise to Right Back Corner by rotating right hip joint

While rotating:

* Lift left toes slightly and let left foot naturally pivot on heel to turn with pelvis and body until left foot is parallel to right foot, pointing to Right Back Corner

Note: Left toes will naturally touch the ground

At the same time:

* Turn both hands until fingers point up

Note: Left middle finger still touches right wrist
Right palm faces Right Front Corner
Left palm faces Left Back Corner

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Right Back Corner
Both feet point to Right Back Corner
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
An imaginary slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and body to top of head
Both hands are in front of chest

Right wrist is at shoulder level
Right hand is straight as an extension of forearm with thumb in front of nose
Right palm faces Right Front Corner
Left hand is bent at wrist, with middle finger touching inside of right wrist and palm facing Left Back Corner
Eyes watch right hand

Incline Backward and Neutralize

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening right leg from heel, bending left knee , and lifting right toes (Fig. 32)

Note: Pelvis and body incline backward
An imaginary slanting straight line extends from right heel through leg and front of body to top of head
Hands remain in position
Weight is on left foot

* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 33)

While bending:

* Exhale and sink *chi* to *tan-tien*

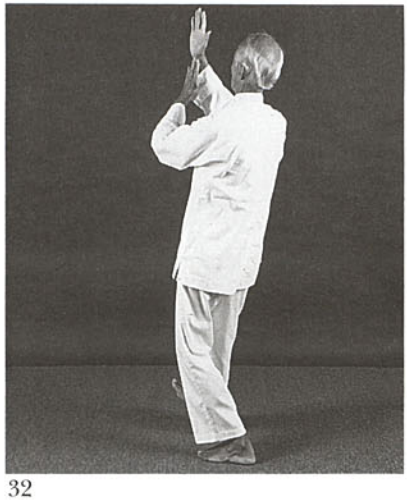
Note: Weight remains on left foot

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right Back Corner
Feet point to Right Back Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight with toes up
Hands are in front of neck and chest, with right wrist at shoulder level
Left hand still touches inside of right wrist
Eyes watch right hand

REMEMBER:

- When shifting weight, always straighten the bent leg from the heel.
- When bringing pelvis and body upright, always exhale and sink the *chi* to the *tan-tien.*
- *Chi,* as it is used here, is breath and cosmic energy. *Tan-tien,* or "sea of energy," is a term used in Taoist meditation. It is located the width of four fingers below the navel, within the pelvic girdle.



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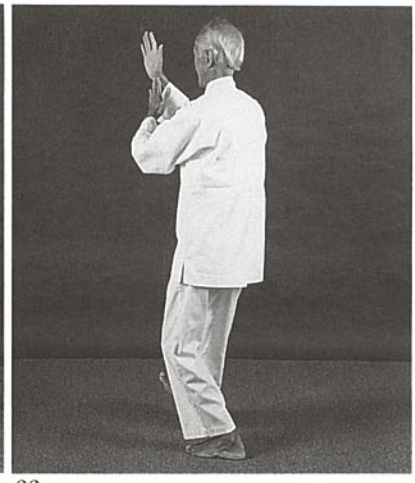

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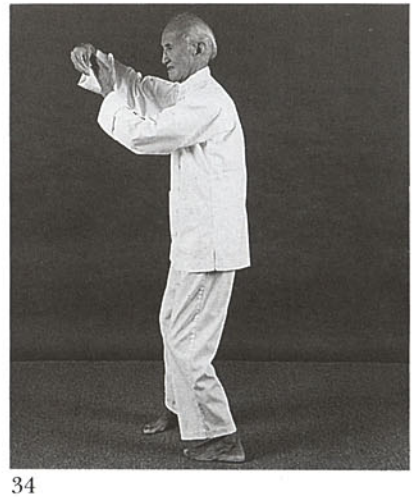


34

Push Forward and Down with Bent Hand

* Turn pelvis and body to Right Front Corner by rotating left hip joint counterclockwise (Fig. 34)

  At the same time:

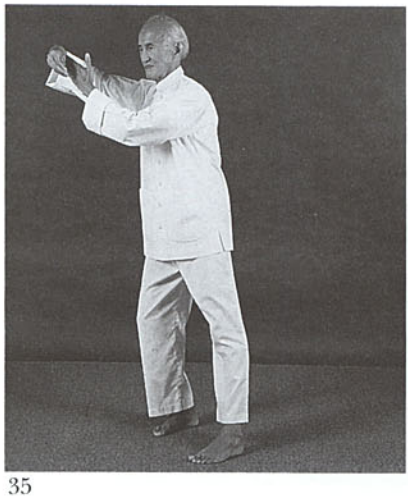
* Let right foot pivot naturally on heel to turn with pelvis and body until right toes naturally touch the ground and point to Right Front Corner

  While pivoting on heel:

  A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from left heel up to top of head

  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight

  Right foot points to Right Front Corner; left foot points to Right Back Corner; weight is on left foot



35

(detail)

At the same time:

* Bring right fingers together and bend right wrist and hand until fingers point to heart

  Note: Arms remain in position
  Left middle finger continues to touch inside of right wrist

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee (Fig. 35)

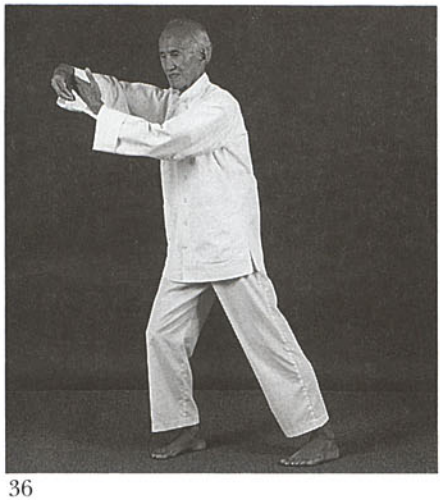
  At the same time:

* Lift left heel slightly; let left foot pivot naturally on ball, turning with pelvis and body until toes are parallel to right foot and point to Right Front Corner

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

  When the above is completed:

  Spine is straight, leaning sideways toward Right Back Corner and facing Right Front Corner
  Both feet point to Right Front Corner
  Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
  An imaginary slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and left side of body to top of head
  Right elbow is above right knee
  Right wrist is bent and at shoulder level
  Right fingers remain together, pointing to heart
  Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm, facing up, with middle finger touching inside of right wrist
  Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
  Eyes watch left hand



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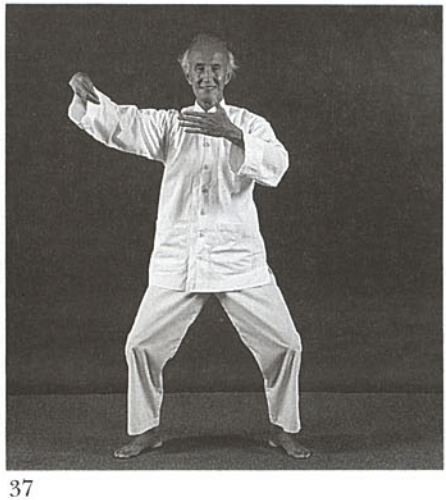


37

POSTURE 2 : *Single Whip*

Slide Sole of Left Foot Backward (Fig. 36)

* Raise left heel slightly and slide left foot back until left heel is even with right heel, slightly wider than hips' width apart

  Note: Weight stays on right foot
  Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
  Feet are parallel and point to Right Front Corner

Rotate Body to Front

* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint counterclockwise (Fig. 37)

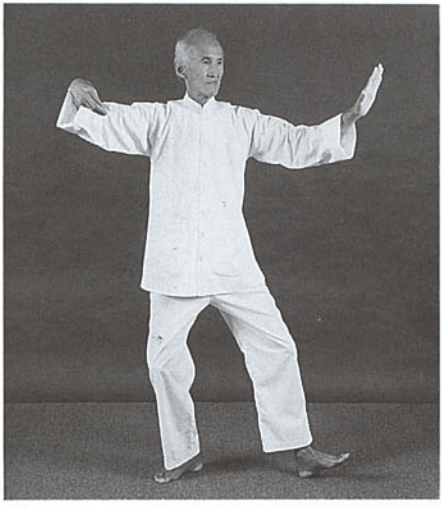
  While turning:

* Lift left toes slightly and let left foot naturally pivot on heel to turn with pelvis and body until toes point to Left Front Corner

  Note: Right foot stays in position
  Weight stays on right foot

  At the same time:

* Move left hand in a horizontal arc from Right to Left until palm is in front of neck and thumb is even with nose



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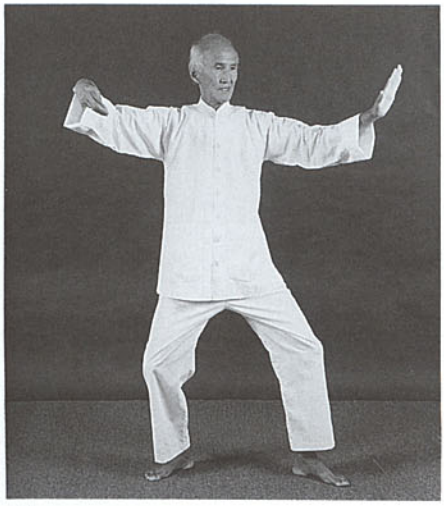

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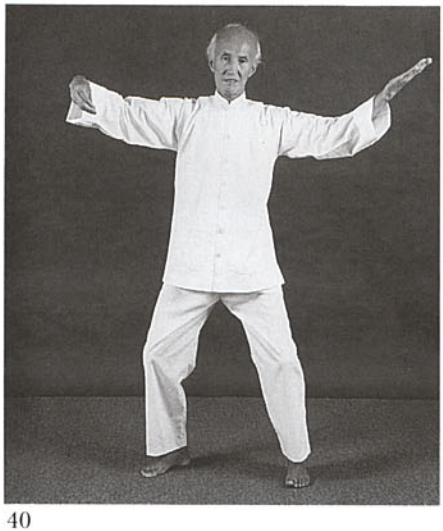
* Continue to move left hand toward Left until it points to Left Front Corner, with palm facing Left Front Corner (Fig. 38)

  Note: Left toes and left hand move together
  Right knee stays bent
  Right arm is above right leg, left arm is above left leg
  Eyes follow left hand

Shift Weight (Fig. 39)

* Lower left toes and bend left knee, shift weight until evenly distributed between both legs with right knee staying in position

  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
  Right foot points to Right Front Corner
  Left foot points to Left Front Corner
  Knees are bent
  Tailbone is dropped
  Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
  Elbows are above knees
  Wrists are at shoulder level
  Right wrist remains bent
  Right fingers remain together, pointing to heart
  Left palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up



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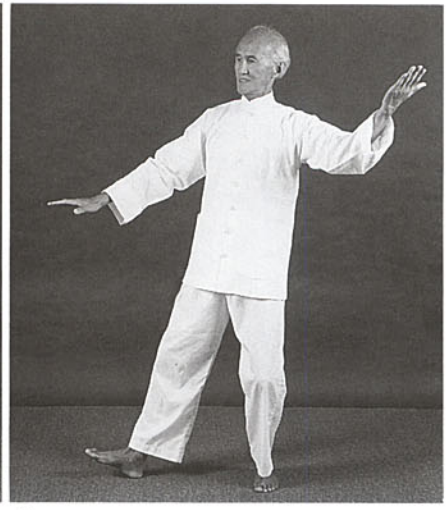


41

Weight is on both feet
Eyes watch left hand
Chi is sunk to *tan-tien*
First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

POSTURE 3 : *Slant Flying*

* Pivot left foot on heel to Front (Fig. 40)
  Note: Weight is still evenly distributed between feet
  Eyes still watch left hand
  At the same time:
* Rotate left wrist until palm faces up diagonally
  Note: Left upper arm and forearm remain in position
  Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm
* Gradually slant body to Left by lifting right toes and straightening right leg as though you are flying (Fig. 41)
  Note: Left knee stays bent, right leg is straight
  Pelvis and body will naturally turn to Right Front Corner
  Right toes will naturally raise and turn to Right Front Corner
  While slanting:
  A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from right heel up to top of head

* Open right fingers and lower right hand by rotating shoulder joint until right wrist is at waist level about twelve inches away, with fingers pointing out
* Shift eyes from left hand to right hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Spine is straight, leaning sideways toward Left Front Corner, and facing Right Front Corner

Left foot points to Front

Right foot points to Right Front Corner

Left knee is bent, right leg is straight with toes pointing up

An imaginary slanting straight line extends from right heel through leg and right side of body to top of head

Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level

Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm, with palm facing up

Right arm is slightly bent and above right leg, with wrist bent and fingers pointing up

Right wrist is at hip-joint level, about twelve inches away from side of hip

Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped

Eyes watch right hand

A sense of lifted spirit is felt from right heel to top of head

POSTURE 4 : *Raise Hands, Step Forward*

Transition: Move right hand and foot forward simultaneously (Fig. 42)

* Lift right heel slightly and move right foot forward in a counterclockwise arc until it points to Front

  Note: Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart

  Right leg stays straight, with toes pointing up

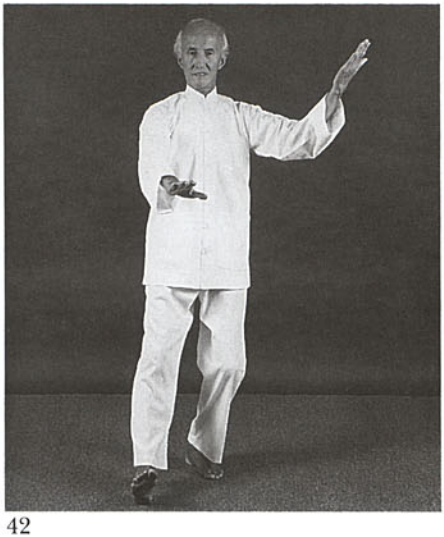
At the same time:

* Move right arm in a horizontal forward arc

  Note: Right arm and right foot should move together

While doing this:

Imagine a thread from above lifting right toes and fingers slightly and pulling them to Front



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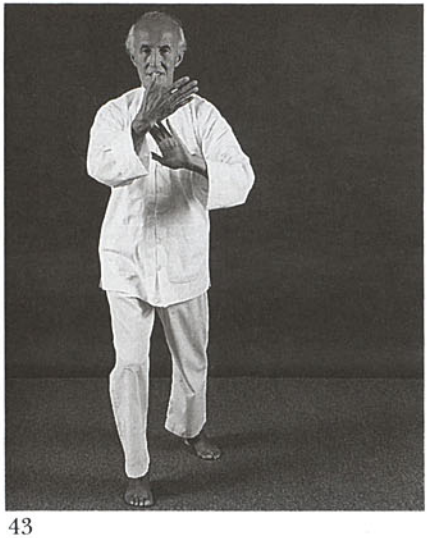

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Note: Left arm and left hand remain in position
Right hand is above right leg, both point to Front
Right palm faces down
Left knee is still bent

Turn Hands and Lean Forward (Fig. 43)

* Scoop right hand toward chest, arcing upward until thumb is in-front of nose, about ten inches away from it
  While doing this:
  Feel cosmic energy being scooped up by left palm and flowing down arm into body
  At the same time:
* Turn left palm forward and lower to meet rising right hand until left middle finger touches inside of right wrist
  Note: Right thumb is in front of nose, about ten inches away
* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee
  Note: Right toes lower naturally
  While shifting weight:
  A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from left heel up to top of head

Note: Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Front
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
An imaginary slanting straight line extends from left heel through leg and body to top of head

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

Raise Hands and Step Forward (Fig. 44)

* Gradually bring pelvis and body upright by pulling pelvis in

At the same time:

* Bring left foot forward until it is even with right foot, about hips' width apart

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Knees are bent
Weight is still on right foot

At the same time:

* Raise right hand in front of forehead, turn your wrist so palm faces front about six inches away from it
* Lower left arm to side of body, using your shoulder joint, until palm is parallel to the ground and fingers point to Front

Note: Left arm is bent
Eyes follow right hand

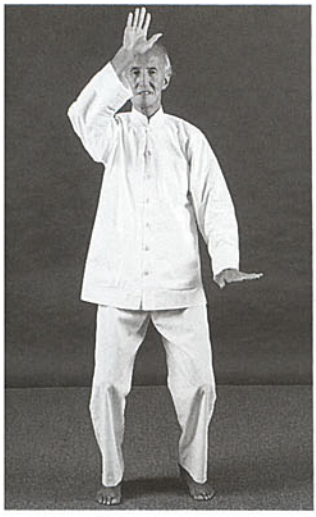
While doing these movements:

A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from right heel up to right hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Both feet point to Front, hips' width apart
Knees are bent
Weight is still on right foot
Right hand is in front of forehead, about six inches away
Right wrist is straight as an extension of forearm
Left arm is bent; hand is at side of body, but does not touch it
Left wrist is bent, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Front
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes watch right hand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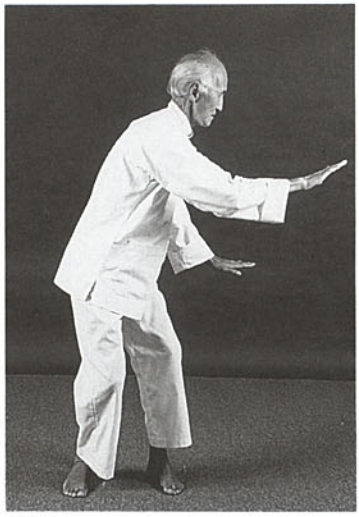
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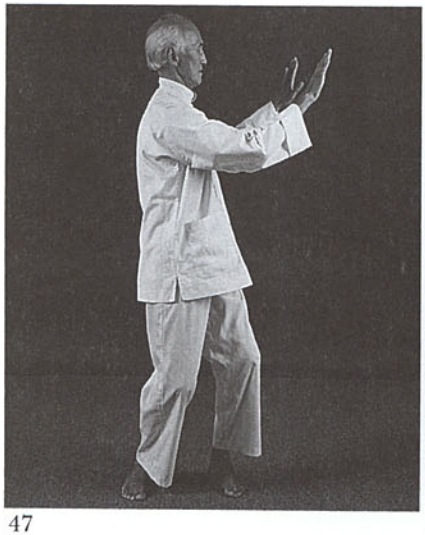
POSTURE 5 : *White Crane Spreads Wings*

Bend Forward (Fig. 45)

* Lean pelvis and body forward at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward until they are at about a forty-five degree angle to the ground
  While bending:
  A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from heels to tailbone and all the way up to top of the head
  Arms and hands remain in position
  Weight is still on right foot
  Eyes follow right hand

Turn to Left (Fig. 46)

* Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating left hip joint counterclockwise
  Note: Pelvis, body, and head remain in a slanting straight line, facing Left
  Arms and hands are in position and follow pelvis and body, turning to Left
  Knees are still bent
  Feet still point to Front
  Weight has shifted naturally to left foot



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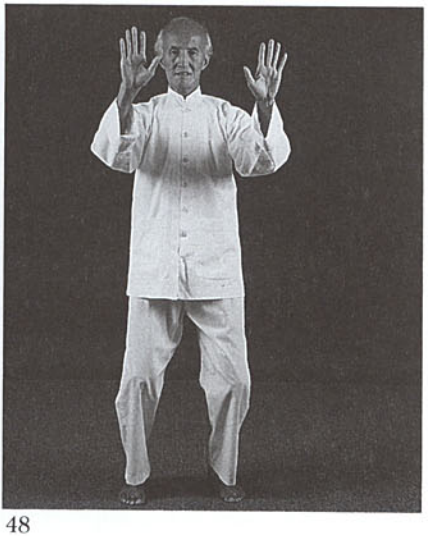


48

Lift Body (Fig. 47)

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pulling pelvis in

  While lifting body upright:

  A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from heels to tailbone and all the way up to top of the head
  Pelvis and body still face Left
  Knees are still bent
  Feet still point to Front
  Weight is on left foot

  At the same time:

* Lift left forearm to a nearly vertical position until wrist is at shoulder level
* Rotate shoulder joints slightly to bring elbows in until forearms are parallel

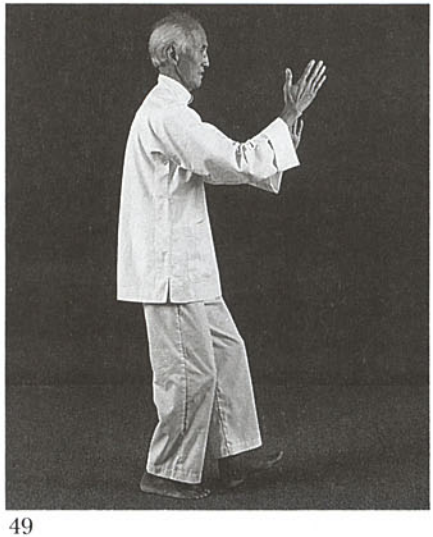
  Note: Wrists are at shoulder level
  Palms face Left, with fingers pointing up
  Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
  Weight is still on left foot
  Eyes look to Left

Turn to Front (Fig. 48)

* Gradually turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint clockwise

  While turning:

  Weight has naturally shifted to right foot
  Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped



49

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Head and neck are aligned with body
Feet are parallel and point to Front, about hips' width apart
Knees are bent
Forearms are nearly vertical, parallel, and shoulders' width apart
Wrists are at shoulder level
Palms face Front
Weight is on right foot
Eyes look to Front

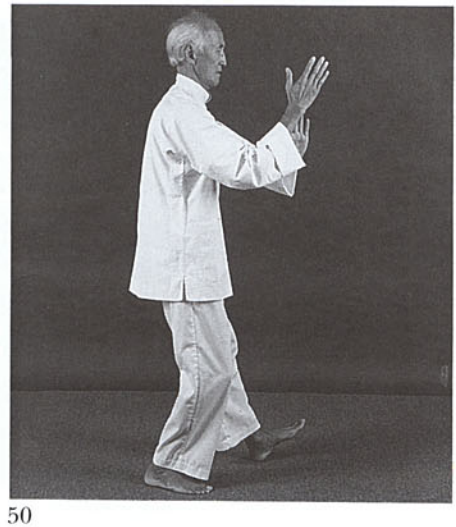
POSTURE 6 : *Brush Knee, Twist Step*

Turn to Left, Brush Left Knee

1) Turn to Left

✳ Pivot right foot on heel by rotating right hip joint counterclockwise until toes point to Left (Fig. 49)
While doing this:
Weight stays on right foot
At the same time:

✳ Lift left toes and let left foot naturally turn to Left on heel



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Note: Pelvis and body will naturally turn to face Left

At the same time:

* Bring right arm in front of the chest, with palm facing Back
* Move left hand inward until middle finger touches inside of right wrist

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Move left leg toward Front until heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart (Fig. 50)

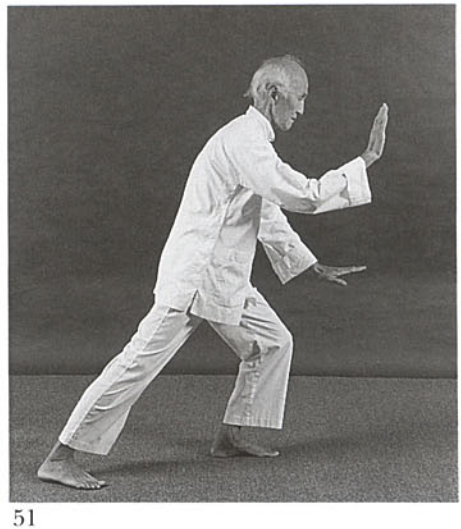
Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Feet point to Left
Left heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight with toes pointing up
Right wrist is at shoulder level
Left wrist is bent, with middle finger touching inside of right wrist
Eyes watch right hand

2) Brush Left Knee (Fig. 51)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

At the same time:

* Rotate right palm until it faces Left, with fingers pointing up



51

Note: Right upper arm remains in position

* Lower left arm at shoulder joint until hand is at side of left leg, halfway between left shoulder and left knee with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left

Note: Left elbow and left wrist remain bent
Arms do not touch body

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left, in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Right leg, body, and head lean forward in a slanting straight line
Right arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level, with fingers pointing up
Left arm is bent, with hand at side of left leg halfway between left shoulder and left knee, palm facing the ground, and fingers pointing to Left
Left knee is above left toes
Eyes look to Left

The Bow-and-Arrow step is one of the unique features of Wu-style Tai-chi. One leg is bent, the other is straight. Also, the heel of the forward leg is approximately in line with the toes of the back leg, hips' width apart.

Twist Right Step, Brush Right Knee

* Take first step toward Left

  l) Twist Right Step—bring right foot forward

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pulling pelvis in (Fig. 52)

  Note: A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from left heel to top of head

  At the same time:

* Bring right foot forward until it is even with left foot, with only the toes touching the ground

* Raise left hand until it is in front of neck, with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Front

* Bring middle finger of right hand to touch inside of left wrist by rotating shoulder joint

  Note: Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm
  Right wrist is bent, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist
  Knees are bent
  Right knee is higher than left knee
  Eyes look to Left

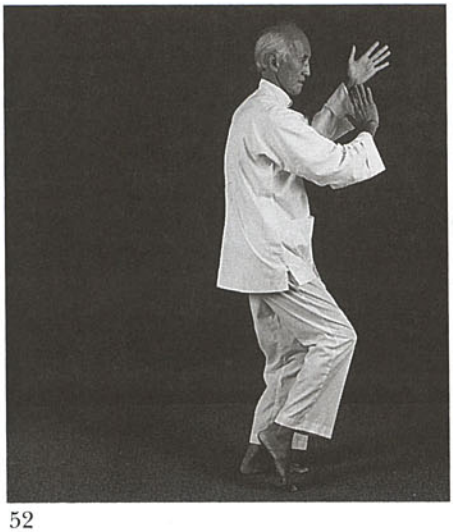
  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Slide right foot forward immediately by straightening right leg until heel touches the ground with toes pointing up

  Note: Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
  Feet point to Left
  Left knee is bent
  Right leg is straight, with heel touching the ground and toes pointing up
  Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart
  Left hand is in front of neck, with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Front
  Right wrist is bent, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist
  Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
  Eyes look to Left



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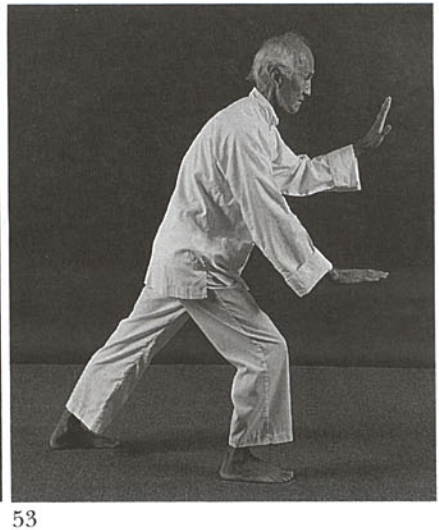


53

When you are able to perform these movements simultaneously, you can use the momentum of pushing the pelvis forward in order to bring the right foot forward.

2) Brush Right Knee (Fig. 53)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lowering right toes

At the same time:

* Rotate left palm until it faces Left with fingers pointing up

Note: Left upper arm remains in position

* Lower right arm at shoulder joint until it is at side of right leg halfway between right shoulder and right knee with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left

Note: Right elbow and right wrist remain bent
Arms do not touch body

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left

Feet are parallel, pointing to Left, in a Bow-and-Arrow step; right knee is bent, left leg is straight left leg, body, and head lean forward in a slanting straight line

Left arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level

Left palm faces Left, with fingers pointing up
Right arm is bent, with hand at side of right leg, halfway between right shoulder and right knee, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left
Eyes look to Left

The preceding description of Twist Step is designed for beginners. Advanced students should raise the leg until the thigh is at hip level and parallel to the ground, and then lower it until the heel touches the ground. Originally, Twist Step was used to protect the groin.

Twist Left Step, Brush Left Knee

* Take second step toward Left

Twist Left Step is the same as the previous movement, Twist Right Step, Brush Right Knee, except left limbs and right limbs are switched.

l) Twist Left Step—bring left foot forward (Fig. 54)

* Bring your pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward

Note: A sense of lifted spirit can be felt from right heel to top of head

At the same time:

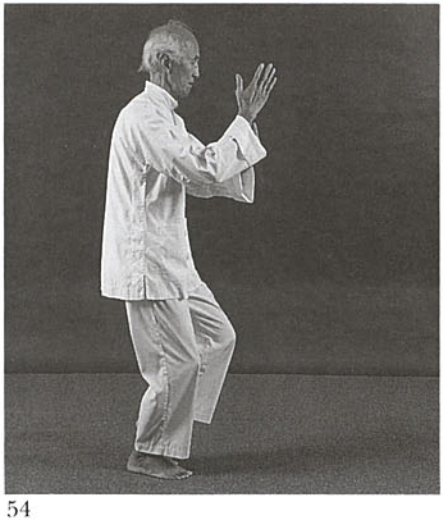
* Bring left foot forward until it is even with right foot, with only the toes touching the ground
* Raise right hand until it is in front of neck, with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Back
* Bring middle finger of left hand to touch inside of right wrist by rotating shoulder joint

Note: Right hand is straight as an extension of forearm
Left wrist is bent, with middle finger touching inside of right wrist
Knees are bent
Left knee is higher than right knee
Eyes look to Left

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Immediately slide left foot forward by straightening left leg until heel touches the ground, with toes pointing up

Note: Left heel is in line with right toes, hips' width apart



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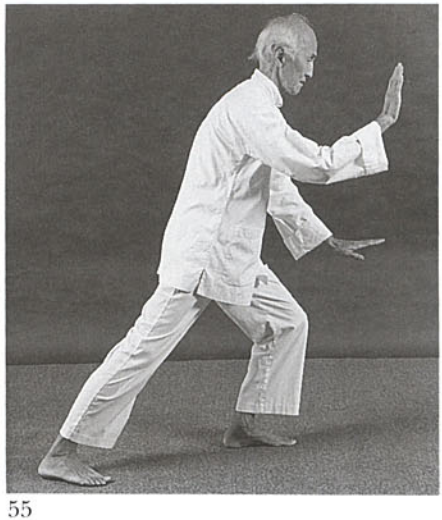

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When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Feet point to Left
Right knee is bent
Left leg is straight, with heel touching the ground and toes pointing up
Left heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart
Right hand is in front of neck with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Back
Left wrist is bent, with middle finger touching inside of right wrist
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left

2) Brush Left Knee (Fig. 55)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

At the same time:

* Rotate right palm until it faces Left, with fingers pointing up

Note: Right upper arm remains in position

* Lower left arm at shoulder joint until hand is at side of left leg, halfway between left shoulder and left knee with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left

Note: Left elbow and left wrist remain bent
Arms should not touch body

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left, in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Right leg, body, and head lean forward in a slanting straight line
Right arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level
Right palm faces Left, with fingers pointing up
Left arm is bent, with hand at side of left leg halfway between left shoulder and left knee, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left
Left knee is above toes of left foot
Eyes look to Left

POSTURE 7 : *Hands Pluck Pipa**

* Raise left arm in front of left shoulder, with palm facing the ground (Fig. 56)

At the same time:

* Lower right arm until middle finger touches inside of left wrist, with palm facing the ground

Note: Left arm is straight but not rigid
Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm
Right arm is bent with middle finger touching inside of left wrist
Both palms face the ground

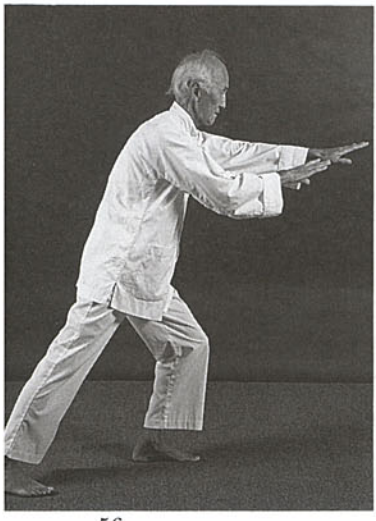
* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee

Note: Left leg, body, and head incline backward in a slanting straight line
Right leg is bent
Right hip joint is above right heel

At the same time:

* Bend left arm, let wrist remain at shoulder level, turn left palm inward until it faces Front by lowering and rotating elbow
* Bend right arm and turn right palm to face Left Back Corner, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist, by lowering and rotating elbow (Fig. 57)

* A *pipa* is a Chinese plucked string instrument with a fretted fingerboard



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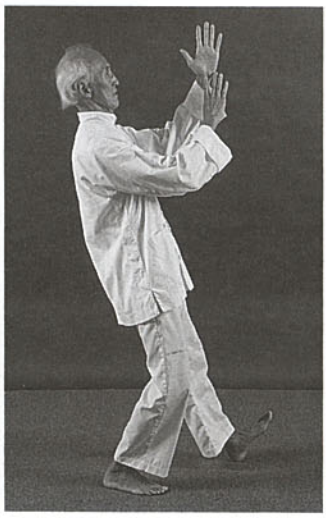

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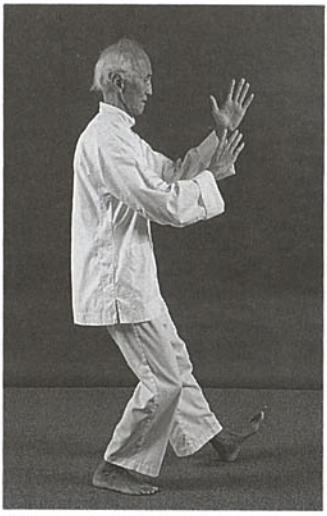


58

Note: Right palm faces Front
Left palm faces Left Back Corner

* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints, with hands in front of chest as though plucking a *pipa* (Fig. 58)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left

Feet point to Left

Right foot is bent, left foot is straight, with toes pointing up

Left arm is bent, with hand in front of neck and wrist at shoulder level

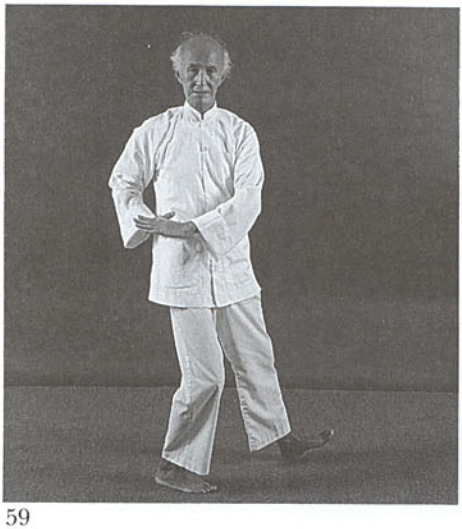
Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm, with palm facing Front and fingers pointing up

Right arm is bent with palm facing Left Back Corner

Middle finger touches inside of left wrist and fingers point to Left

Eyes look to Left

While bringing pelvis and body upright, always exhale and sink chi to tan-tien.



59

(detail)

POSTURE 8 : *Step Forward and Intercept, Punch*

Transition: Turn to Front (Fig. 59)

* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint

While doing this:

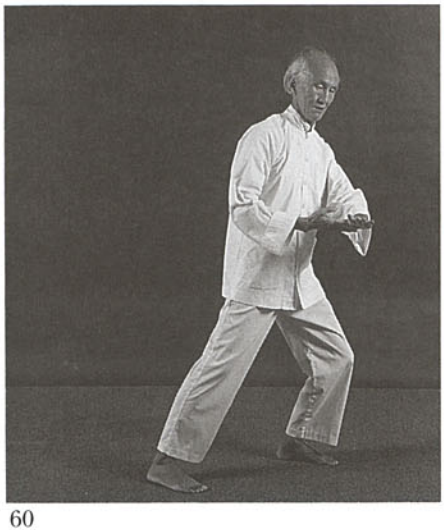
* Keep pelvis and body upright and relax hip joints

Note: Feet stay in position

At the same time:

* Turn left palm face down and right palm face up
* Lower both hands until right wrist touches right side of waist and right middle finger touches inside of left wrist

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Feet point to Left
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight with toes pointing up
Right middle finger is touching left wrist
Right hand points to Left Front Corner, with palm facing up
Left hand points to Right Front Corner, with palm facing down
Left forearm is parallel to the ground
Upper arm and forearm do not touch body
Eyes watch left hand



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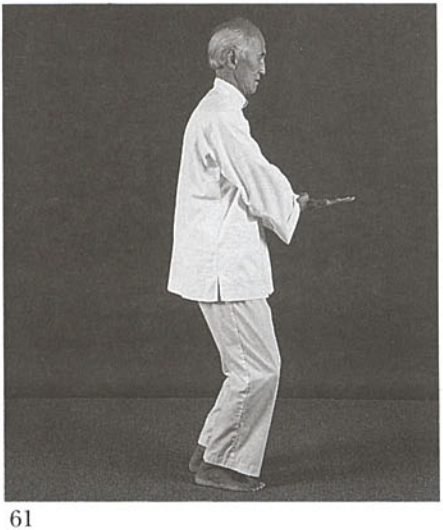


61

Step Forward and Intercept

* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes (Fig. 60)

  Note: Right leg, body, and head will naturally lean forward in a slanting straight line and face Left Front Corner
  Arms remain in position
  Eyes watch left hand

* Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating left hip joint counterclockwise

  At the same time:

* Move left hand forward in a horizontal arc until it is in front of left side of waist with fingers pointing to Left Front Corner

  Note: Right middle finger still touches inside of left wrist and follows left hand's movement
  Palms remain in position
  Forearms are parallel to the ground and do not touch body
  Weight stays on left foot

* Bring right foot forward until it is even with and touches left foot, using the momentum of your turning body (Fig. 61)

  Note: Pelvis and body will naturally become upright

At the same time:

* Bring hands in a small counter-clockwise, horizontal circle by rotating shoulder joints
* Lift left heel, shift weight to right foot

Note: Both knees are bent
Left knee is higher than right knee

At the same time:

* Lift both hands with right middle finger touching inside of left wrist, turn left palm to face Front and right palm to face Left Back Corner until left wrist is at shoulder level (Fig. 62)

Note: Hands and left heel should lift simultaneously
Right foot is flat on the ground
Left heel is up with toes touching the ground
Right middle finger keeps touching inside of left wrist and follows left hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

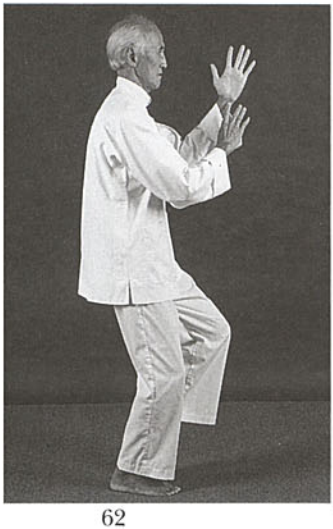
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Right foot points to Left
Left foot is even with right foot, with toes touching the ground
Knees are bent, right knee is lower than left knee
Hands are in front of chest and neck
Left wrist is at shoulder level
Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm with palm facing Front
Right hand is bent, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes watch left hand

* Slide left foot forward and toward left by straightening knee until heel touches the ground and toes point up (Fig. 63)

Note: Left heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart
Right leg stays in position, weight is on right foot

* Lean pelvis and body forward with hands in front of chest and neck by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes (Fig. 64)

Note: Hands and arms remain in position
Right leg, body, and head lean forward in a slanting straight line



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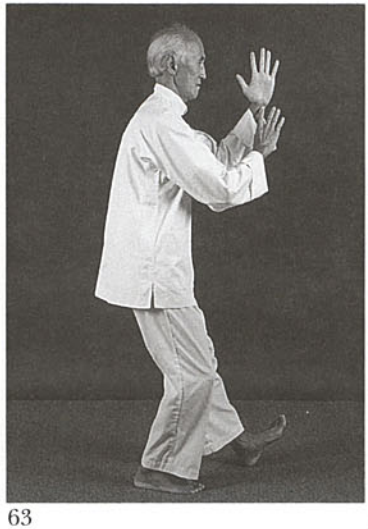

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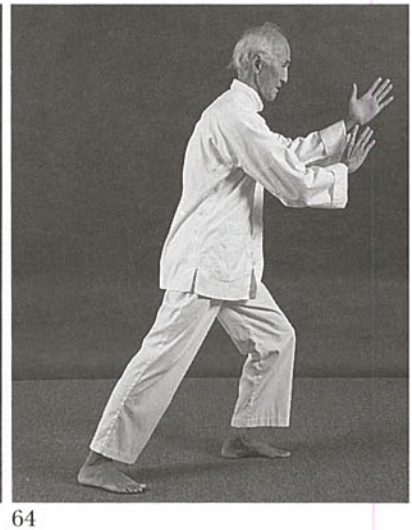

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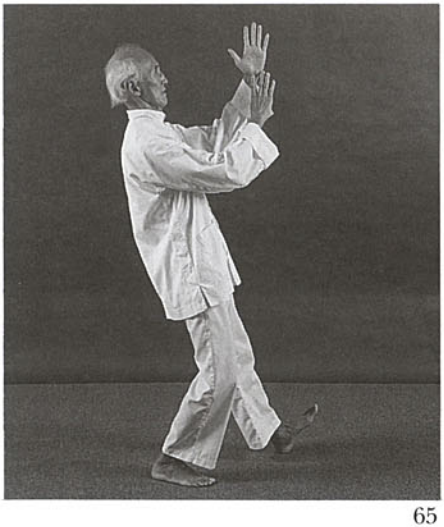

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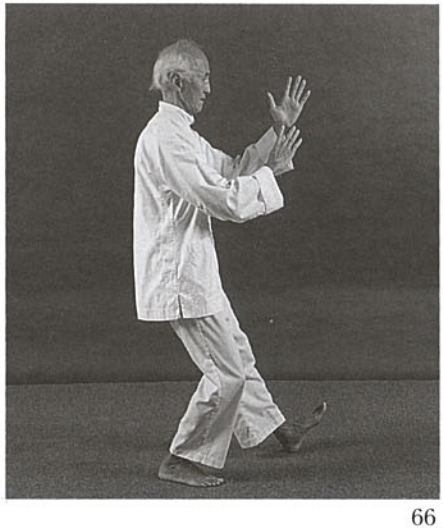
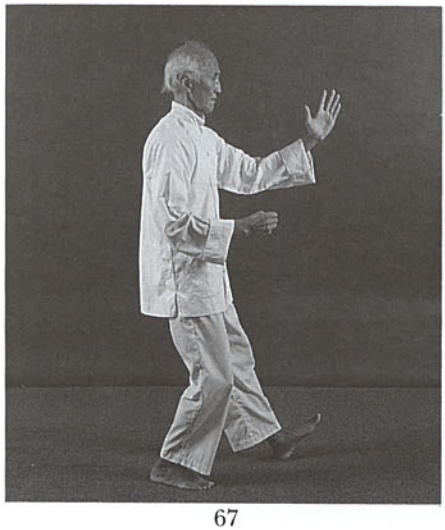


66

Punch

l) Bend Body Forward

* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee (Fig. 65)
  Note: Right hip joint is above right heel
* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 66)



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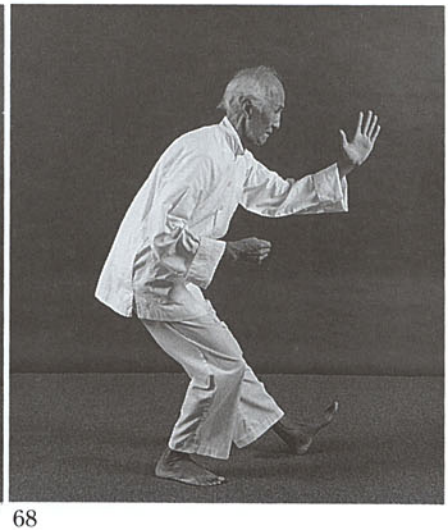


68

* Make a fist with right hand, thumb facing up, and lower forearm until parallel to the ground and pointing to Left (Fig. 67)

  Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
  Left arm remains in position, with wrist at shoulder level
  Right elbow remains bent
  Right forearm is parallel to the ground and points to Left
  Right upper arm is parallel to body, but does not touch it

* Lean pelvis and body forward at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward until body is at a forty-five-degree angle to the ground, and move right elbow slightly backward (Fig. 68)

REMEMBER:

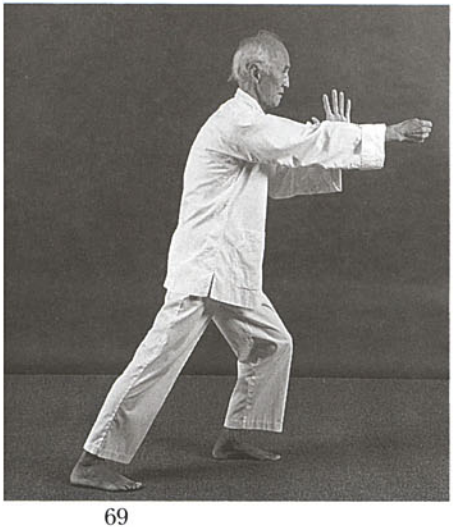
• When forming a fist, the thumb is always underneath the fingers.

2) Punch (Fig. 69)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

At the same time:

* Straighten right arm until it is parallel to the ground at shoulder level as if punching forward, using momentum from the movement of leaning pelvis and body forward



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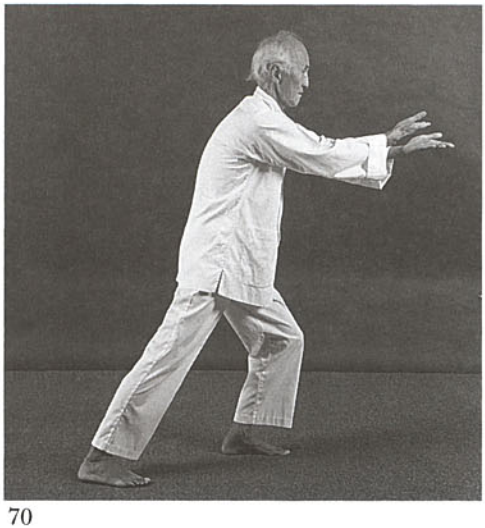


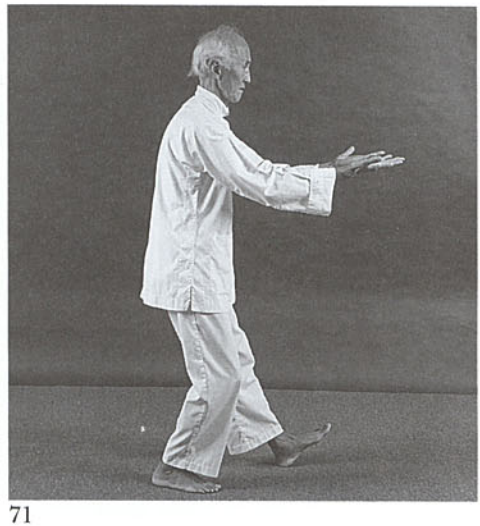
70

Note: Right leg, body, and head lean forward in a slanting straight line
Left hand and arm remain in position
Heel of left hand is near right elbow pit, but not touching it

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left
Feet are parallel in a Bow-and-Arrow step, pointing to Left
A slanting straight line extends from right heel through leg and body to top of head
Right arm is straight, at shoulder level and parallel to the ground, with fist pointing to Left
Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level, palm facing Front and fingers pointing up
Eyes watch left hand

POSTURE 9 : *Seal and Close*

* Straighten left arm (Fig. 70)
  While straightening arm:
* Turn left palm up and bring left wrist underneath right wrist



71

At the same time:

* Open right fist and turn palm up with fingers straight, as an extension of forearm

  Note: Body still leans forward
  Wrists are crossed, with right wrist above left wrist
  Palms face up

* Bring pelvis and body back until upright by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee (Fig. 71)

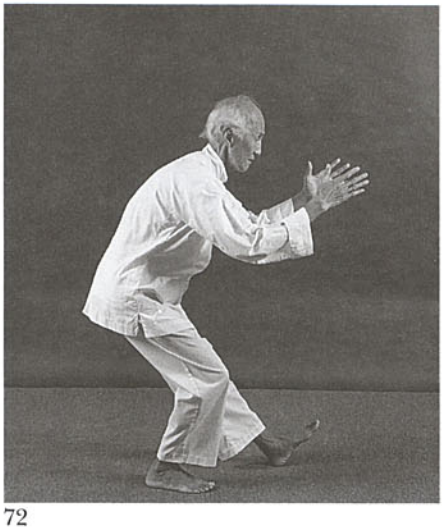
At the same time:

* Move arms outward slightly until forearms are parallel to the ground, shoulders' width apart

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Feet point to Left
Right knee is bent, with hip joint above heel
Left leg is straight, with toes pointing up
Arms are slightly bent, with forearms parallel to each other and to the ground
Palms face up
Upper arms do not touch body
Eyes look to Left



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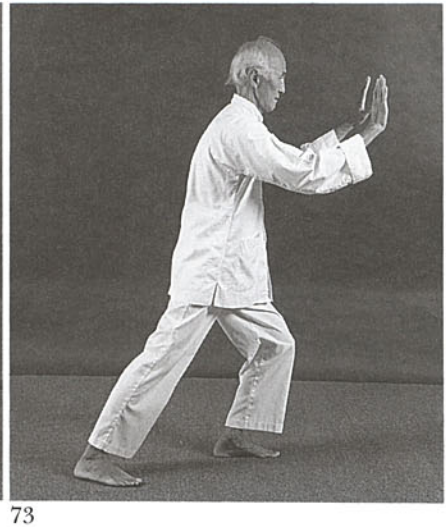


73

POSTURE 10 : *Embrace Tiger, Push Mountain*

Embrace Tiger (Fig. 72)

* Lean pelvis and body forward at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward until upper body is at a thirty-degree angle to the ground
* Turn both palms to face each other by rotating shoulder joints and pulling buttocks further backward as if embracing a tiger
* Lower elbows, letting wrists remain at shoulder level until forearms and upper arms form ninety-degree angles

  Note: Arms are bent, with forearms parallel to each other

  Hands are straight but not rigid, as extension of forearms

  Palms face each other, shoulders' width apart

Push Mountain (Fig. 73)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

  At the same time:
* Turn both palms to face Left with fingers pointing up as if pushing a mountain

While doing this:
Upper arms and forearms remain in position
Try to visualize pushing the mountain with the whole body, not just with the arms and hands. The classics say, "The *jing* is rooted in the feet, sprouted through the legs, governed at the waist, and manifested in the hands."
When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left
Feet point to Left, in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
A slanting straight line extends from right heel through leg and body to top of head
Arms are bent, parallel to each other with wrists at shoulder level
Forearms and upper arms form ninety-degree angles
Palms face Left, with fingers pointing up
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left

POSTURE 11 : *Fist Under Elbow*

Transition: Lower arms (Fig. 74)

* Lower both arms until palms face the ground by rotating shoulder joints

Note: Body and legs remain in position
Elbows remain in position and are bent slightly

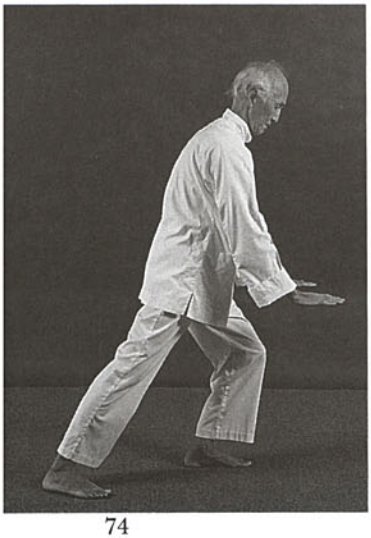
Incline Backward

* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee (Fig. 75)

At the same time:

* Move left forearm back toward body until it is parallel to the ground with index finger touching right elbow pit
* Make a fist with right hand and move right forearm back toward body until right forearm is parallel to the ground, and thumb and index finger of right fist are under left elbow

Note: Forearms overlap and do not touch body
Left forearm is above right forearm with palm facing down
Right fist is under left elbow



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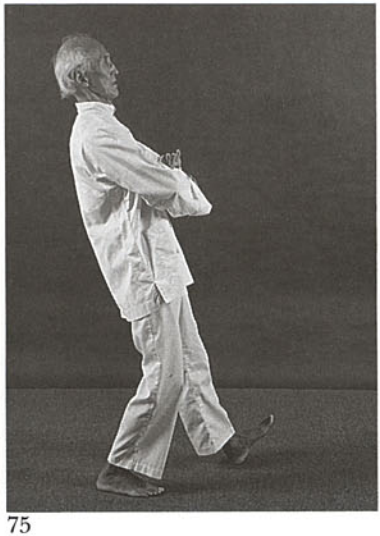

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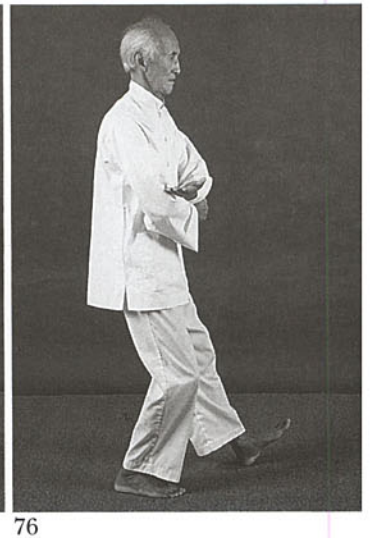


76

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

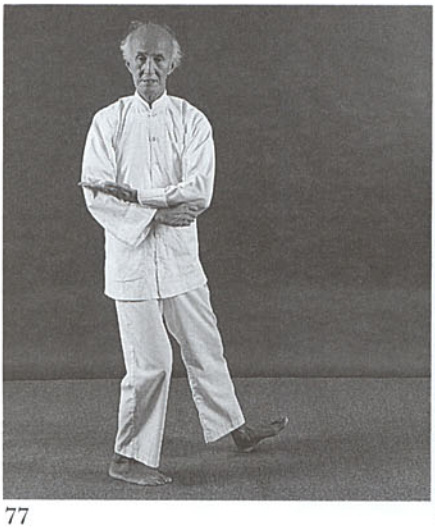
* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 76)

At the same time:

* Turn left palm face up with edge of palm touching right elbow pit

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Feet point to Left
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight with toes pointing up
Forearms overlap
Upper arms and forearms do not touch body
Left forearm is above right forearm
Left palm faces up, with edge of palm touching right arm at elbow
Right fist is under left elbow
Eyes look to Left



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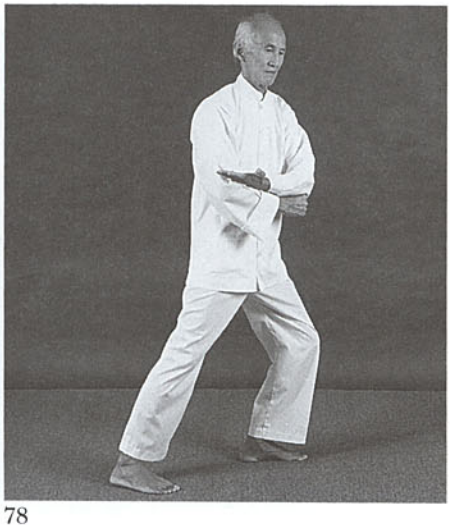


78

Turn to Front (with fist under elbow) (Fig. 77)

* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint

Note: Arms and feet remain in position

Turn to Left Front Corner (with fist under elbow) (Fig. 78)

* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

Note: Right leg, body, and head will naturally lean forward in a straight line, facing Left Front Corner
Arms remain in position
Eyes look to Left Front Corner

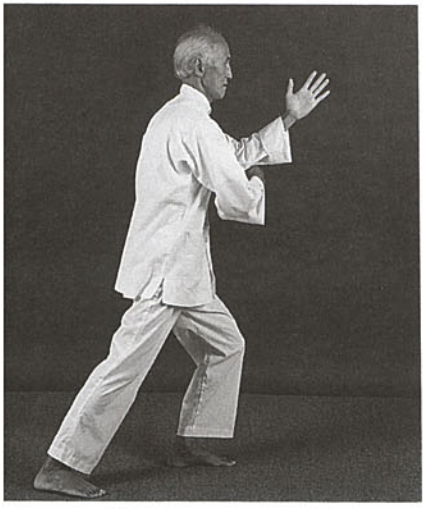
Turn to Left (with fist under elbow) (Fig. 79)

* Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating left hip joint counterclockwise

While turning:

* Pivot left forearm forward on right fist until left hand is in front of chest, about ten inches away
* Turn left palm until wrist is at shoulder level and palm faces front
* Raise right hand until middle finger touches inside of left wrist

Note: Right arm remains in position, with fist under left elbow



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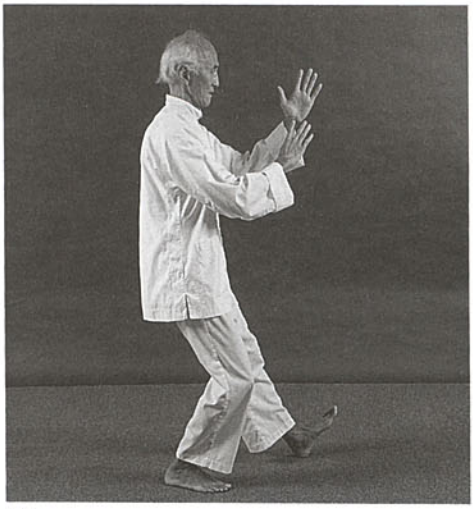


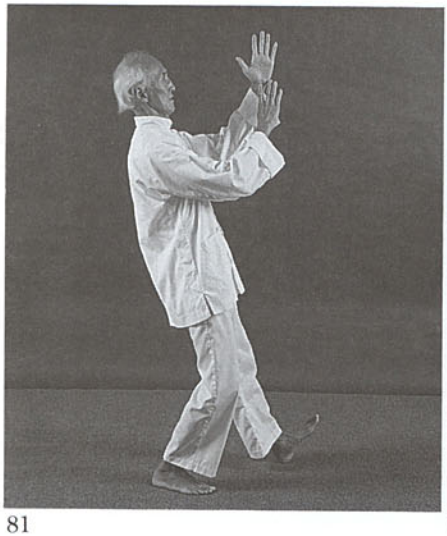
80

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left
Feet point to Left, in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
A slanting straight line extends from right heel through leg and body to top of head
Left arm is bent, with hand in front of neck and wrist at shoulder level
Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm, with palm facing front and fingers pointing up
Right fist is under left elbow
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left

POSTURE 12 : *Backward Repulse Monkey*

Left Backward Repulse Monkey

* Take first step toward Right
* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee (Fig. 80)
  Note: Left leg, body, and head incline backward in a slanting straight line



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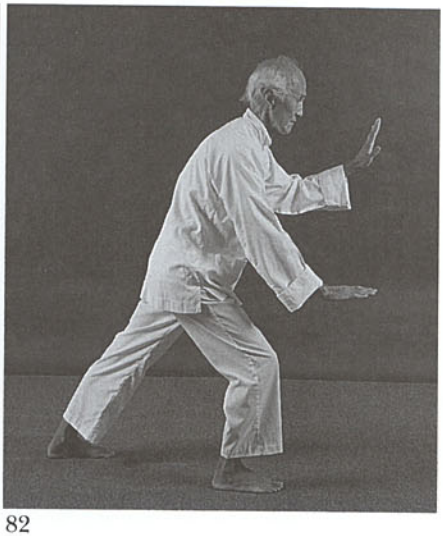


82

At the same time:

* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 81)

  Note: Arms and legs stay in position
* Lean pelvis and body forward at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward until body is at about a sixty degree angle to the ground (Fig. 82)

  At the same time:
* Move left leg backward until leg, body, and head form a slanting straight line
* Turn left hand to face Left with fingers pointing up
* Lower right arm at shoulder joint until hand is beside right leg, halfway between right shoulder and right knee with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left

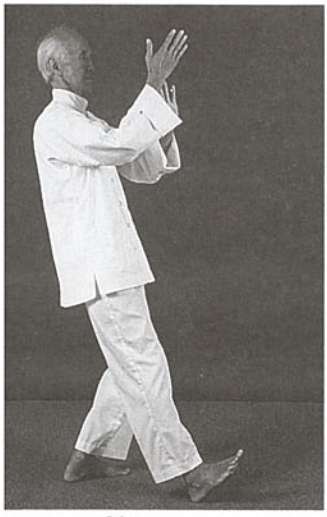
  Note: Right elbow and right wrist remain bent
  Right hand should not touch right leg

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

Right Backward Repulse Monkey

* Take second step toward Right

  These movements are the same as the first step toward Right, Left Backward Repulse Monkey, except that the left limbs and the right limbs are switched.
* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting right toes, straightening right leg, and bending left knee (Fig. 83)



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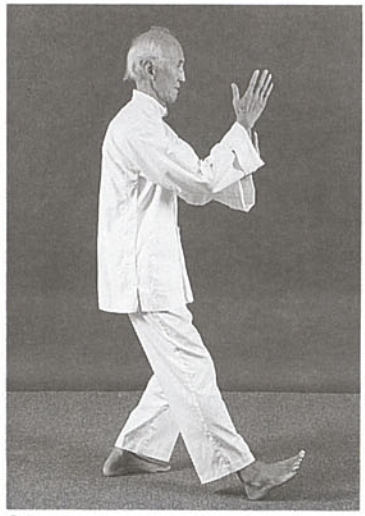

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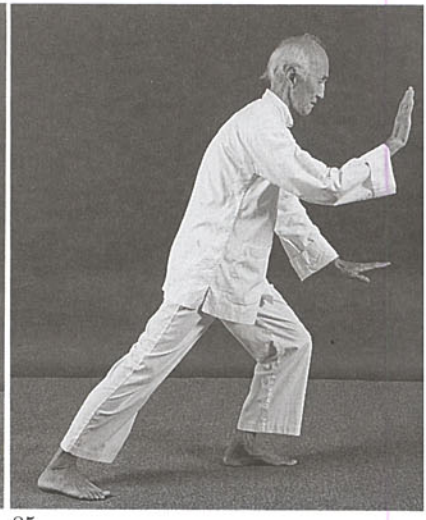


85

At the same time:

* Move right forearm in front of right shoulder and turn right palm until wrist is at shoulder level and palm faces Back

  Note: Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm

* Raise left hand until middle finger touches inside of right wrist

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 84)

  Note: Arms and legs stay in position

* Lean pelvis and body forward at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward until body is at about a sixty-degree angle to the ground

  At the same time:

* Move right leg backward until leg, body, and head form a slanting straight line

* Turn right hand to face Left with fingers pointing up and lower left arm at shoulder joint until hand is beside left leg, halfway between left shoulder and left knee, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left (Fig. 85)

  Note: Left elbow and left wrist remain bent
  Left hand should not touch left leg

Left Backward Repulse Monkey

* Take third step toward Right

  These movements are the same as the first step toward Right, Left Backward Repulse Monkey (p. 141).

  Perform these movements once more.

Right Backward Repulse Monkey

* Take fourth step toward Right

  These movements are the same as the second step toward Right, Right Backward Repulse Monkey (p. 142).

  Perform these movements once more.

POSTURE 13 : *Pick Needle at Bottom of Sea*

Transition: Raise arm (Fig. 86)

* Raise left arm in front of left shoulder, at shoulder level with palm facing the ground

  At the same time:

* Lower right arm until middle finger touches inside of left wrist, with palm facing Left Back Corner

  Note: Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left
  Feet are parallel, pointing to Left in a Bow-and-Arrow step
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  Left arm is straight, but not rigid
  Left hand is straight as an extension of forearm, pointing to Left
  Right arm is bent slightly, with middle finger touching left wrist

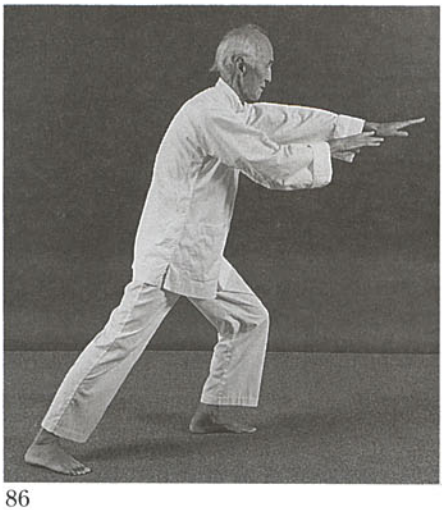
Incline Backward (Fig. 87)

* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee

  Note: Left leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line inclining backward

  At the same time:

* Bend left arm, letting wrist remain at shoulder level, and turn left palm inward until it faces Front by lowering and rotating elbow
* Bend right arm and turn right palm so it is facing Left Back Corner by lowering and rotating elbow with middle finger touching inside of left wrist



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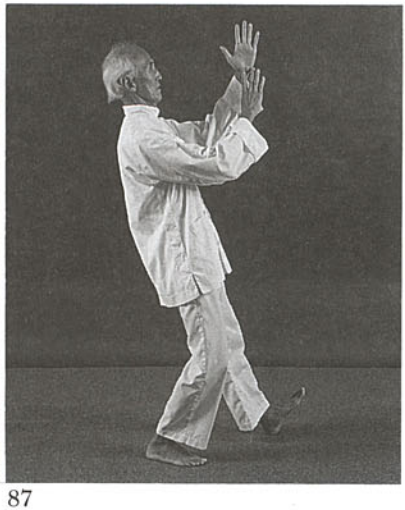

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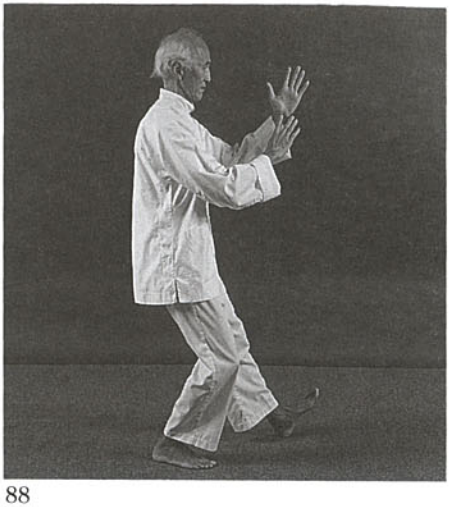
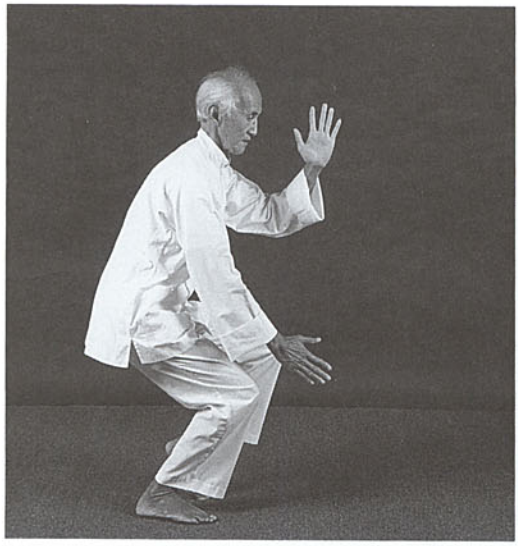


88

Note: Left wrist is at shoulder level, with palm facing Front and fingers pointing up
Right middle finger touches inside of left wrist, with palm facing Back
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes watch right hand

Squat

✳ Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 88)
Note: Arms and hands remain in position



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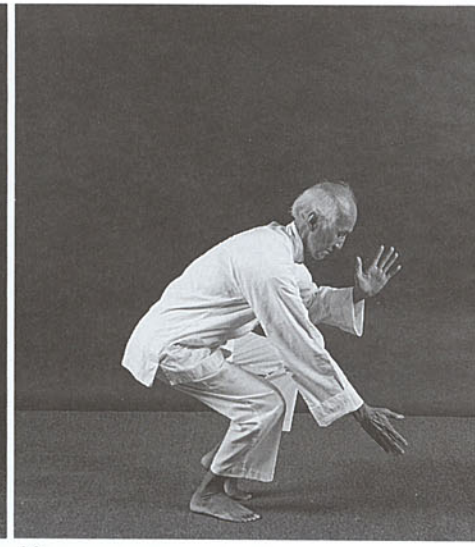
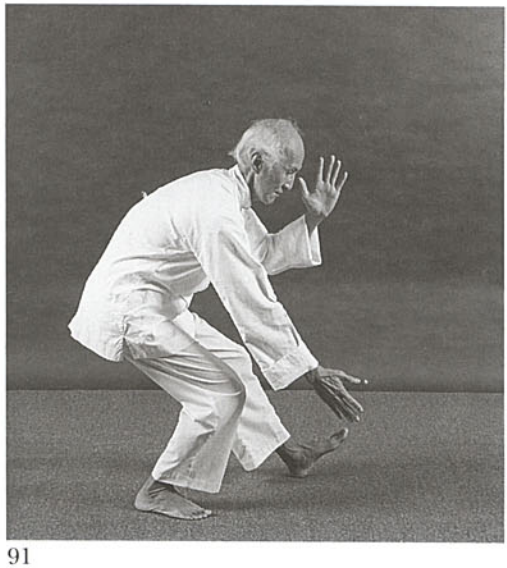


90

* Bring left foot back and even with right foot, with toes touching the ground, by bending left knee
  Note: Both knees are bent, left knee is higher than right knee
* Lower pelvis and body vertically downward by bending hip joints and knees (Fig. 89)
  Note: Pelvis and body should stay upright
  Arms and hands remain in position
  Eyes watch right hand

Pick Needle

* Straighten right arm by extending elbow
  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
  Right leg and left arm stay in position
  Right arm will naturally point diagonally, down at about a forty-five-degree angle to the ground
  Right hand is straight as an extension of forearm, with palm facing Back
* Lean pelvis and body forward at hip joints by pulling buttocks backward (Fig. 90)
  While inclining:
* Stretch right arm slightly, with fingers straightened as if picking needles from the bottom of the sea



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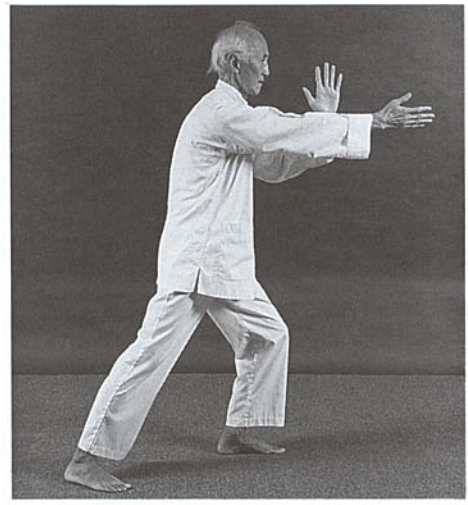
When the above is completed:
Pelvis, body, and head form a slanting straight line, leaning forward at about a forty-five-degree angle to the ground
Right foot points to Left
Left foot is next to right foot with heel raised
Both knees are bent
Left knee is higher than right knee
Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Front
Right arm and right hand are straight, pointing diagonally towards the ground with palm facing Back
Eyes watch right hand

POSTURE 14 : *Fan Through Back*

Transition: Stretch leg (Fig. 91)

* Slide left foot forward until knee is straight and heel touches the ground

  Note: Arms, body, and right foot remain in position
  Left leg is straight with toes pointing up
  Feet are slightly wider than hips' width apart



92

Lift Body (Fig. 92)

* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes until body, pelvis, and right leg form a slanting straight line, leaning forward

  At the same time:

* Raise right arm to shoulder level

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body lean forward slightly, facing Left
  Feet point to Left, in a Bow-and-Arrow step
  Left foot is bent, right foot is straight
  A slanting straight line extends from right heel through leg and body to top of head
  Right arm is straight, at shoulder level, parallel to the ground, palm facing Back
  Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level, and palm facing Front
  Heel of left palm is close to right elbow pit, but does not touch it
  Eyes watch right hand

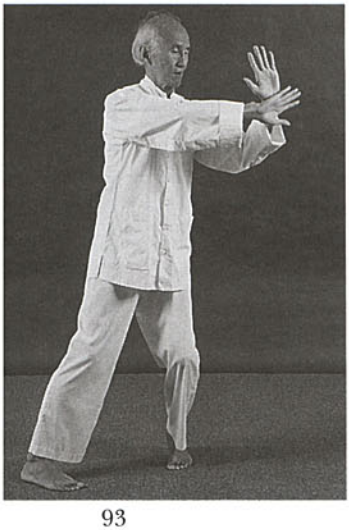
Turn to Front

* Pivot left foot on heel to point to Front (Fig. 93)

  At the same time:

* Turn right forearm until palm faces Front

  Note: Right leg and arm remain in position
  Shoulders are sunk



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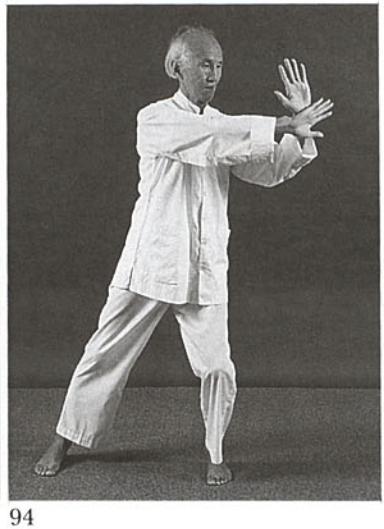

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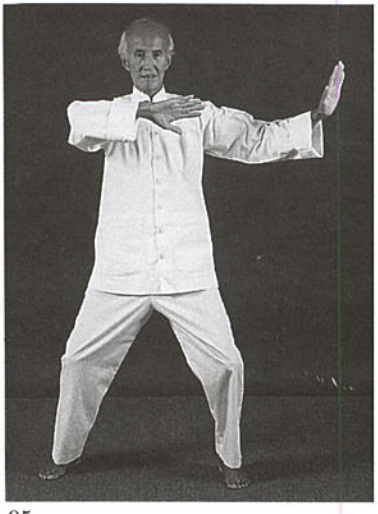


95

* Raise right heel slightly and slide right foot back until it is parallel to left foot, slightly wider than hips' width apart (Fig. 94)

  Note: Feet are parallel, and point to Front
  Left knee stays bent, right leg stays straight
* Turn pelvis and body to Front by following right foot
* Gradually shift weight until evenly distributed between both legs by bending right knee

  Note: Left knee stays bent
* Move right hand in front of chest, about six inches away by moving arm horizontally at shoulder joint (Fig. 95)

  Note: Left arm remains in position
  Right hand is in front of chest, with forearm parallel to the ground, palm facing Front
  Eyes continue watching left hand, but neck does not bend

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Feet are parallel, pointing to Front, slightly wider than hips' width apart
Knees are bent
Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level
Left palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up
Right arm is bent, with forearm parallel to the ground

Right hand is in front of chest, about six inches from body with palm facing Front
Shoulders are sunk
Tailbone is dropped
Weight is on both feet
Eyes watch left hand

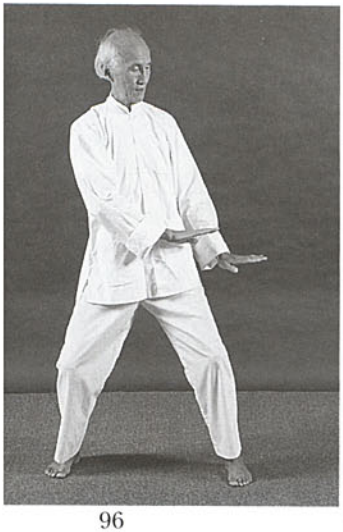
POSTURE 15: *Cloud Hands*

Transition: Turn to Right Front Corner

* Shift weight to right leg by straightening left leg and bending right knee more (Fig. 96)
  Note: A slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and side of body to top of head

  At the same time:
* Lower both arms until right thumb touches top of left hip and inside of left wrist touches left thigh about four inches below right palm
  Note: Both palms face the ground
  Hands point to Left Front Corner
  Eyes follow left hand
  Neck does not bend
* Turn pelvis and body to Right Front Corner by rotating right hip joint and pivoting left foot on heel until left foot points to Right Front Corner (Fig. 97)
  Note: Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
  Right foot remains in position, pointing to Front
  Left foot points to Right Front Corner
  Arms and hands remain in position
* Pivot right foot on heel until it points to Right Front Corner
* Move right forearm upward in an arc to Right until right wrist is at shoulder level
  Note: Right palm faces Right Front Corner and right fingers point up
  Upper arm and forearm are at about a ninety-degree angle

  At the same time:
* Let left arm follow right arm in an upward arc until middle finger touches inside of right wrist and palm faces Left Back Corner and is stretched diagonally upward



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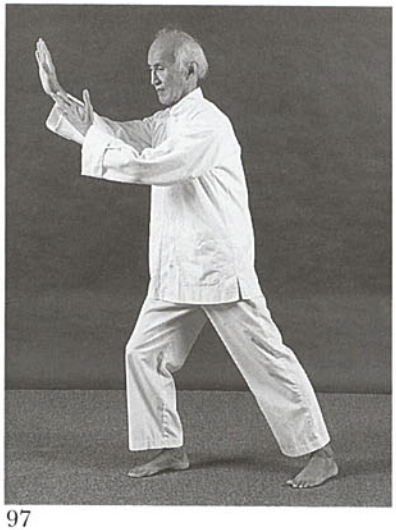

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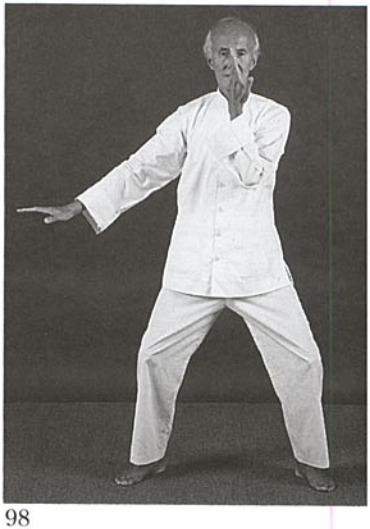


98

While moving arms:
Eyes follow left hand
First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.
When the above is completed:
Pelvis, body, and feet face Right Front Corner
Feet are parallel, slightly wider than hips' width apart, pointing to Right Front Corner
Right knee is bent, left leg is straight
A slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and body to top of head
Right upper arm and forearm form a ninety-degree angle, with elbow above knee
Right palm faces Right Front Corner, with wrist at shoulder level and fingers up
Left palm faces Left Back Corner, facing up diagonally with middle finger touching inside of right wrist
Eyes watch left hand

Cloud Hands (1)

* Take first step toward Left

l) Turn to Front (Fig. 98)

* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint, pivoting left leg on heel, and bending left knee until left foot points to Left Front Corner

While bending left knee:
Right knee remains bent
Weight is on both legs
At the same time:

* Move left hand and turn left palm inward until tip of little finger is in front of nose about four inches away, with palm facing Left by bending and lowering elbow and rotating forearm
* Lower right arm at shoulder joint until wrist is below hip joint, about ten inches outside of right thigh
* Gradually bend right wrist, until fingers point up

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Right foot points to Right Front Corner
Left foot points to Left Front Corner

2) Turn to Left Front Corner (Fig. 99)

* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by rotating left hip joint, straightening right knee, and pivoting right foot on heel

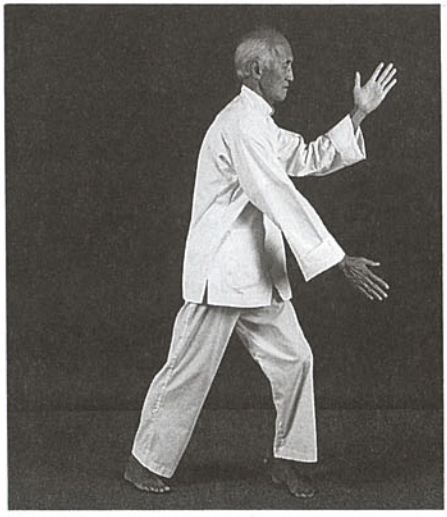
Note: Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Front Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight

At the same time:

* Move right arm in a horizontal arc toward Left until palm faces Back, about six inches in front of left thigh and halfway between left knee and left wrist, by rotating shoulder joint
* Turn left palm to face Front until wrist is at shoulder level by rotating forearm and extending elbow

Note: Left upper arm and forearm form a ninety-degree angle

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.
When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body face Left Front Corner
Feet are parallel, slightly wider than hips' width apart and pointing to Left Front Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
A slanting straight line extends from right foot through leg and body to top of head
Left upper arm and forearm form a ninety-degree angle, with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Front
Right arm is straight, halfway between left knee and left wrist, with palm facing Back
Eyes watch left hand



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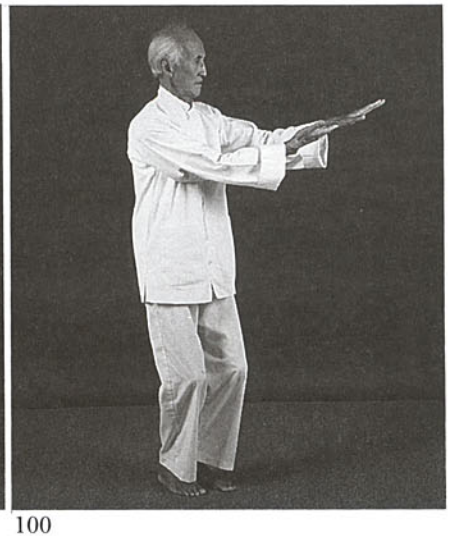


100

3) Move Feet Together (Fig. 100)

* Move right foot so it is beside left foot

Note: Knees are bent
Feet are parallel, next to each other, pointing to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

* Straighten left elbow and rotate left forearm until left forearm and upper arm form a 120-degree angle, with left palm facing Left Front Corner and fingers pointing up
* Raise right hand until middle finger touches inside of left wrist by bending right elbow

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left Front Corner
Left upper arm and forearm form a 120-degree angle
Left wrist is at shoulder level with palm facing Left Front Corner
Middle finger of right hand touches inside of left wrist
Right palm faces Right Back Corner
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes watch left hand

4) Turn to Front (Fig. 101)

* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating left hip joint and pivoting right leg on heel until right foot points to Right Front Corner

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Heels are touching
Left foot and right foot form a ninety-degree angle
Right foot points to Right Front Corner
Left foot points to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

* By bending and lowering elbow, move right hand and turn right palm inward until tip of little finger is in front of nose, about four inches away, so palm faces Right with fingers pointing up
* Lower left arm at shoulder joint until wrist is close to hip joint and hand is about ten inches away from left thigh

Note: Upper arm and forearm remain in position

* Gradually bend left wrist, until fingers point up

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

5) Turn to Right Front Corner (Fig. 102)

* Turn pelvis and body to Right Front Corner by rotating right hip joint and pivoting left foot on heel until left foot is parallel to right foot

Note: Feet are parallel, side by side, pointing to Right Front Corner

At the same time:

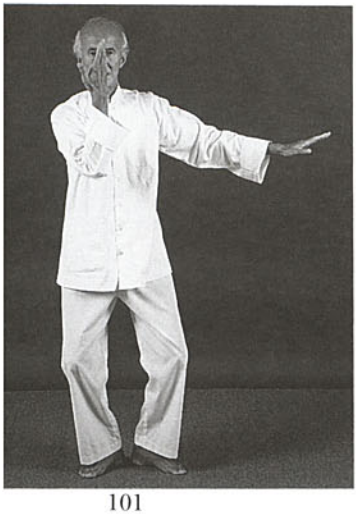
* Move left arm in an arc toward Right by rotating shoulder joint until palm faces Back, about six inches in front of right thigh and halfway between right knee and right wrist
* Turn right palm to face Front by rotating forearm and extending elbow until wrist is at shoulder level

Note: Right upper arm and forearm form a sixty-degree angle

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right Front Corner
Feet are parallel, side by side, pointing to Right Front Corner
Knees are bent



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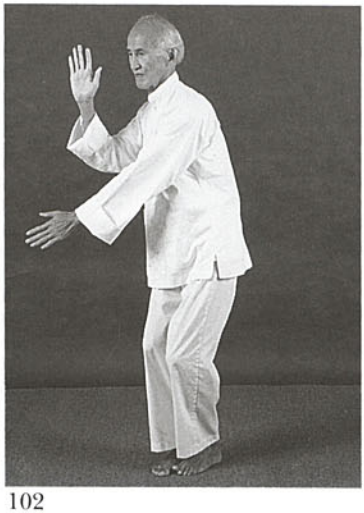

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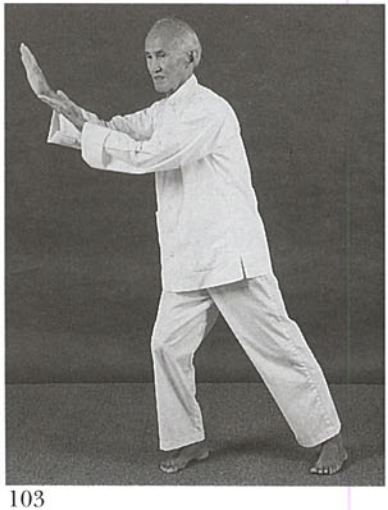


103

Right forearm and upper arm form about a sixty-degree angle with wrist at shoulder level, and palm facing Front
Left arm is straight, halfway between right knee and right wrist, with palm facing Back
Eyes watch right hand

6) Move Feet Apart (Fig. 103)

* Slide left foot to Left until it is straight and naturally in line with right heel, slightly more than hips' width apart

At the same time:

* Lean pelvis and body toward Left slightly

Note: A slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and side of body to top of head

* Extend right elbow and rotate right forearm until right forearm and upper arm form a 120-degree angle with right palm facing Right Front Corner and fingers pointing up
* Raise left hand by bending right elbow until middle finger touches inside of right wrist

Note: Right upper arm and forearm form a 120-degree angle
Right wrist is at shoulder level
Right palm faces Right Front Corner
Middle finger of left hand touches inside of left wrist
Left palm faces Left Back Corner
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Eyes watch left hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis, body, and feet face Right Front Corner

Feet are parallel, slightly wider than hips' width apart and pointing to Right Front Corner

Right knee is bent, left leg is straight

A slanting straight line extends from left foot, through leg and body, to top of head

Right upper arm and forearm form a 120-degree angle with elbow above knee

Right palm faces Right Front Corner with wrist at shoulder level and fingers up

Left palm faces Left Back Corner, turned upward diagonally with middle finger touching inside of right wrist

Eyes watch left hand

Cloud Hands (2)

Take second step toward Left

These movements are same as the previous movements, Cloud Hands (1)—first step toward Left. (p. 151)

The movement at the end of 6) Move Feet Apart (p. 155) is the same as the beginning of Posture 15: Cloud Hands—Transition: Turn to Right Front Corner (p. 150). Compare the two sections of "When the above is completed" (pp. 151, 156); (Figs. 98–103).

Repeat 1) through 6) of Cloud Hands (1)

Single Whip (Transition)

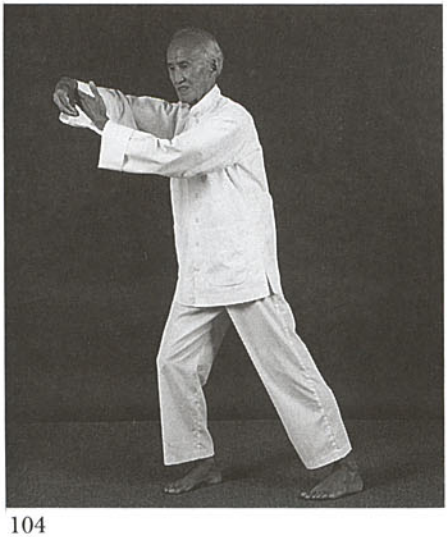
Here, Single Whip serves as a transition between Section One and Section Two.

Bend Wrist and Bring Fingers Together

* Bring right fingers together and bend right wrist and right hand until fingers point to heart (Fig. 104)

Note: Arms and legs remain in position

Left middle finger continues to touch inside of right wrist



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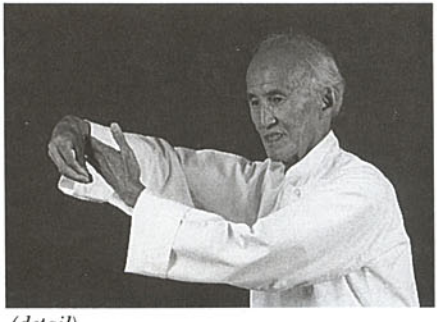


(detail)

The following movements can be found in Posture 2: Single Whip

Slide Sole of Left Foot Backward (p. 113)

Rotate Body to Front (p. 113).

Shift Weight (p. 114).

Repeat once again
When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Right foot points to Right Front Corner
Left foot points to Left Front Corner
Knees are bent
Tailbone is dropped
Shoulders are sunk, elbows are dropped
Elbows are above knees
Wrists are at shoulder level
Right wrist remains bent
Right fingers remain together, pointing to heart
Left palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up
Weight is on both feet
Eyes watch left hand
Chi is sunk to *tan-tien*

POSTURE 16 : *High Pat on Horse*

This posture, High Pat on Horse, is performed alternately with Posture 17: Right, Left Separate Foot. Note that High Pat on Horse—left is included in Posture 17 (p. 162).

Transition: Turn to Left (Fig. 105)

* Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating right hip joint and pivoting right heel until right foot points to Left
* Lift left toes and pivot on heel

  Note: Left foot will straighten naturally and pivot to Left, with toes pointing up

  While turning:
* Straighten both arms until they are parallel to each other and to the ground, with palms facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left

High Pat on Horse—right (Fig. 106)

* Bring left foot next to right foot with heel up and toes touching the ground

  Note: Pelvis and body stay upright, facing Left
  Knees are bent
  Left knee is higher than right knee

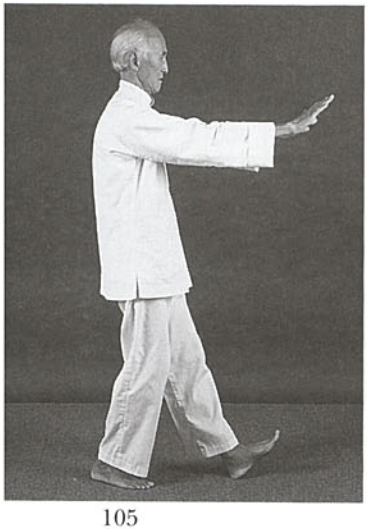
  At the same time:
* Turn left palm face up and draw left wrist toward body until fingers point to Left Front Corner, about ten inches from chest

  Note: Left forearm is parallel to the ground
  Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
  Upper arm and forearm should not touch body
* Draw right hand toward body and turn right palm to face Left Back Corner until heel of right hand rests on heel of left hand, with fingers pointing up

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
  Right foot points to Left
  Left toes touch the ground, even with right foot
  Knees are bent, with left knee higher
  Hands are in front of chest, about ten inches away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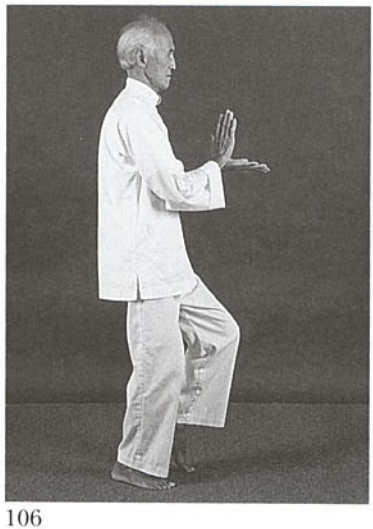
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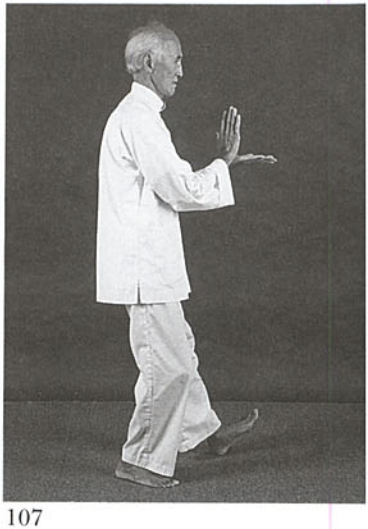

107

Left forearm is parallel to the ground
Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
Heel of right hand rests on heel of left hand
Palms are perpendicular to each other
Left palm faces up, with fingers pointing to Left Front Corner
Right palm faces Left Back Corner, with fingers pointing up
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left

POSTURE 17 : *Right, Left Separate Foot*

This posture, Right, Left Separate Foot, is performed alternately with Posture 16: High Pat on Horse

Right Separate Foot

1) Lean Forward

✳ Lift left foot slightly and move foot forward and slightly to Back until knee straightens and heel touches the ground, about hips' width from right foot (Fig. 107)

Note: Pelvis, body, and arms remain in position
Left heel is in line with right toes
Left toes point up

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes (Fig. 108)

  Note: Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step, facing Left
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  Hands are in front of chest, about ten inches away
  Heel of right hand rests on heel of left hand
  Palms are perpendicular to each other
  Left palm faces up, with fingers pointing to Left Front Corner
  Right palm faces Left Back Corner, with fingers pointing up
  Eyes look to Left

2) Turn to Left Front Corner—separate hands (Fig. 109)

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pulling pelvis in
* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint clockwise

At the same time:

* By rotating shoulder joint, move right arm in an outward, downward arc until right wrist is about ten inches away from right hip joint, with palm facing down and fingers pointing to Right Front Corner

  Note: Right elbow and wrist stay in position

* Move left arm slightly toward Left Back Corner in an upward arc until palm faces diagonally upward and wrist is at shoulder level

  Note: Left elbow and wrist stay in position
  Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

3) Turn to Left—cross wrists (Fig. 110)

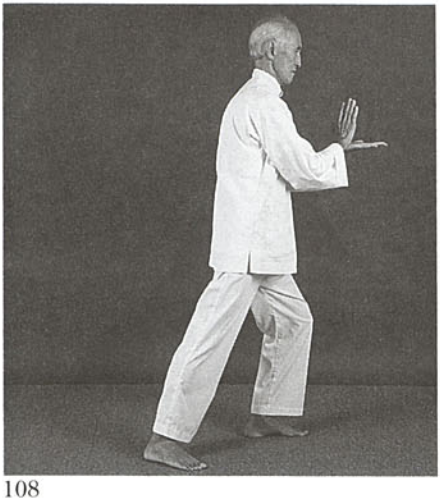
* Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating left hip joint; bring right foot forward and even with left foot, with toes touching the ground

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright

At the same time:

* Form a fist with right hand and move right fist toward Back in an inward, upward arc until wrist is about ten inches in front of neck at shoulder level, with palm facing body

  Note: Thumb is underneath fingers



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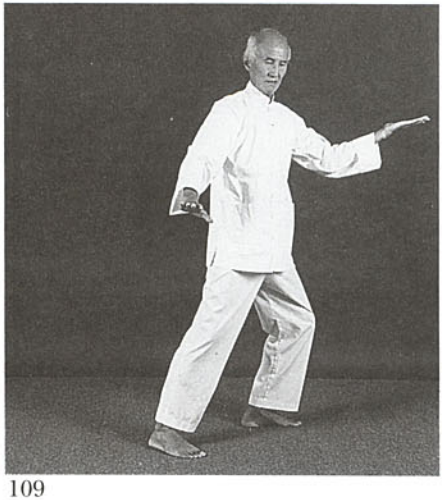

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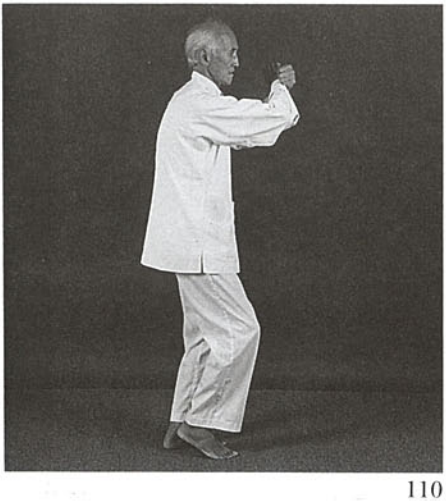

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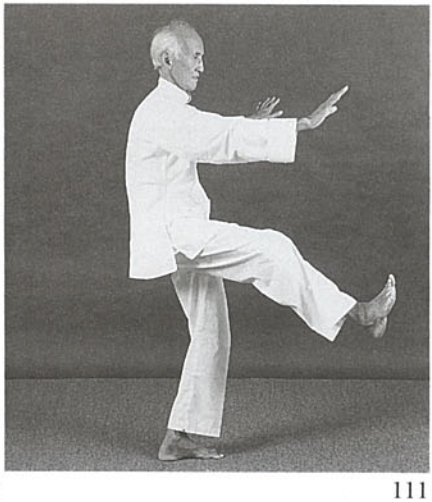


111

✳ Form a fist with left hand and move left fist toward Front in an inward, downward arc until left wrist crosses right wrist, with inside of fist facing away from body

Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
Fists cross at inside of wrists in front of neck at shoulder level, about ten inches away

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

4) Separate Right Foot (Fig. 111)

✳ Raise right foot in front of body by rotating right hip joint, extending right knee and pointing toes up

✳ Immediately move right foot horizontally toward Front until sole of right foot faces Left Front Corner, kicking sideways with outer edge of right foot

Note: Pelvis and body stay upright, facing Left
Ankle of right foot is bent, with toes pointing to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

✳ Open hands and straighten arms by rotating shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms and hands are at shoulder level and fingers point to Left Corners, with palms facing the ground

Note: Arms are at shoulder level
Left arm and fingers point to Left Back Corner
Right arm and fingers point to Left Front Corner
Right arm and hand are above right leg

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Left leg is bent, flat on the ground, with toes pointing to Left
Right leg is slightly bent, at hip level or lower
Right sole faces Left Front Corner with toes pointing up
Arms are straight, at shoulder level
Palms face the ground
Left arm and fingers point to Left Back Corner
Right arm and fingers point to Left Front Corner
Right arm and hand are above right leg
Eyes watch right hand

High Pat on Horse—left (Fig. 112)

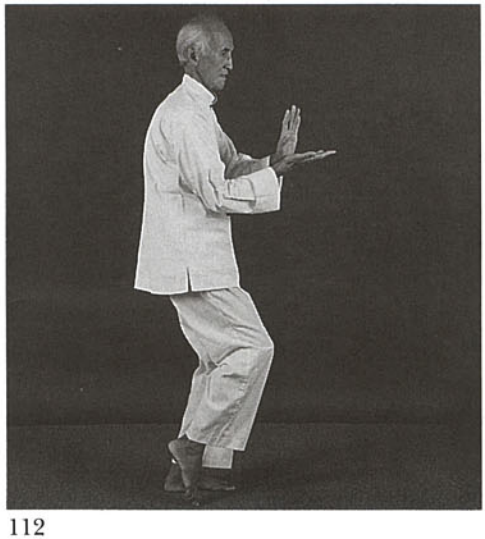
High Pat on Horse is performed alternately with Posture 17: Right, Left Separate Foot (p. 159). The movements of this transition, High Pat On Horse—left, are the same as High Pat On Horse—right, except left limbs and right limbs are switched.

✳ Lower right leg and bring right foot next to left foot, with heel up and toes touching the ground

Note: Pelvis and body stay upright, facing Left
Knees are bent
Right knee is higher than left knee

At the same time:

✳ Turn right palm face up and draw right wrist toward



112

body until fingers point to Left Back Corner, about ten inches from chest

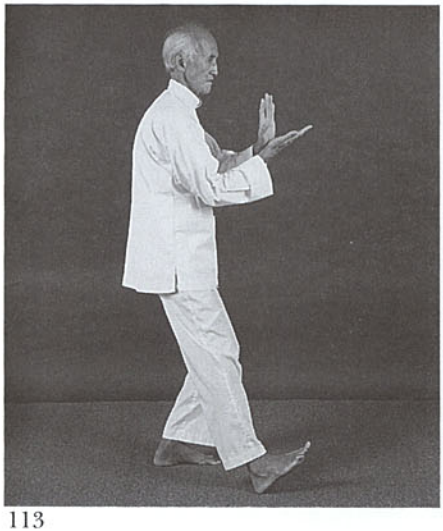
Note: Right forearm is parallel to the ground
Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
Upper arm and forearm do not touch body

* Draw left hand toward body and turn left palm to face Left Front Corner until heel of left hand rests on heel of right hand, with fingers pointing up

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Left foot points to Left
Right toes touch the ground, even with left foot
Knees are bent, with right knee higher
Hands are in front of body, about ten inches away
Right forearm is parallel to the ground
Right hand is as an extension of forearm
Heel of left hand rests on heel of right hand
Palms are perpendicular to each other
Right palm faces up, with fingers pointing to Left Back Corner
Left palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left



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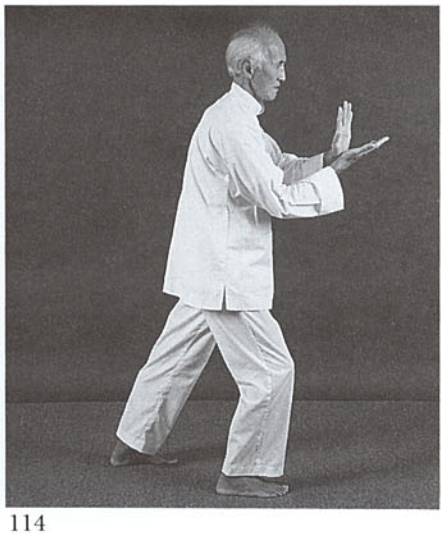


114

Left Separate Foot

The movements of Left Separate Foot are similar to those of Right Separate Foot, except the left limbs and right limbs are switched.

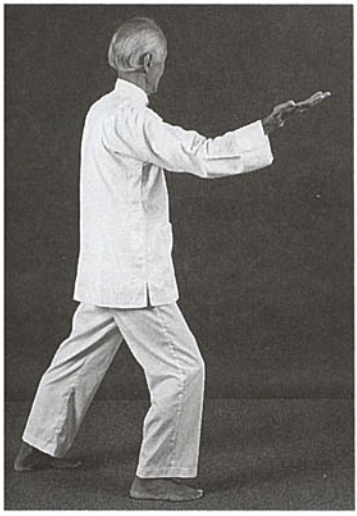
1) Lean Forward

* Lift right foot slightly and move foot forward and slightly to Front until knee straightens and heel touches the ground, about hips' width from left foot (Fig. 113)

  Note: Pelvis, body, and arms remain in position
  Right heel is in line with left toes
  Right toes point up

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lowering right toes (Fig. 114)

  Note: Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step, facing Left
  Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
  Hands are in front of chest, about ten inches away
  Heel of left hand rests on heel of right hand
  Palms are perpendicular to each other
  Right palm faces up, with fingers pointing to Left Back Corner
  Left palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up
  Eyes look to Left



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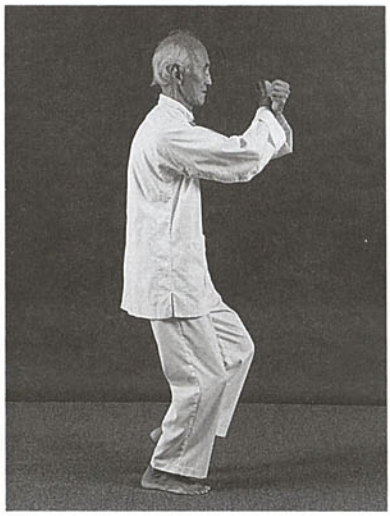

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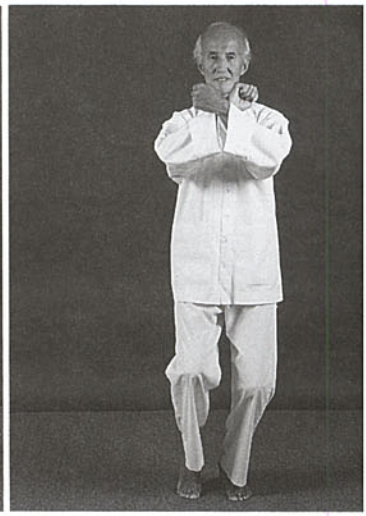


116' *(second view)*

2) Turn to Left Back Corner—separate hands (Fig. 115)

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pulling pelvis in
* Turn pelvis and body to Left Back Corner by rotating left hip joint

At the same time:

* By rotating shoulder joint, move left arm in an outward, downward arc until left wrist is about ten inches away from left hip joint, with palm facing down and fingers pointing to Right Back Corner

Note: Left elbow and wrist stay in position

* Move right arm slightly toward Left Front Corner in an upward arc until palm faces diagonally upward and wrist is at shoulder level

Note: Right elbow and wrist stay in position
Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

3) Turn to Left—cross wrists (Fig. 116, 116')

* Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating right hip joint; bring left foot forward and even with right foot, with toes touching the ground

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright

At the same time:

* Form a fist with left hand; move left fist toward Front in

an inward upward arc until wrist is about ten inches in front of neck at shoulder level, with palm facing body

Note: Thumb is underneath fingers

* Form a fist with right hand; move right fist toward Back in an inward downward arc until right wrist crosses left wrist, with palm facing away from body

Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
Fists cross at inside of wrist, at shoulder level and about ten inches away from front of neck

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

4) Separate Left Foot (Fig. 117)

* Raise left foot in front of body by rotating left hip joint, extending left knee, and pointing toes up
* Immediately move left foot horizontally toward Back until sole of left foot faces Left Back Corner, kicking sideways with outer edge of left foot

Note: Pelvis and body stay upright, facing Left
Ankle of left foot is bent, with toes pointing to Left Back Corner

At the same time:

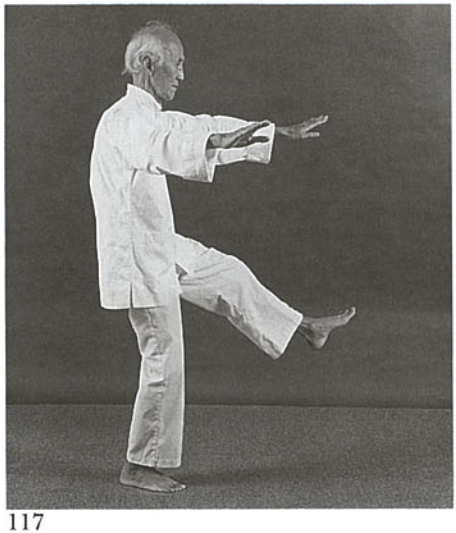
* Open hands; straighten arms by rotating shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms and hands are at shoulder level and fingers point to Left Corners, with palms facing the ground

Note: Arms are at shoulder level
Right arm and fingers point to Left Front Corner
Left arm and fingers point to Left Back Corner
Left arm and hand are above left leg

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Right leg is bent, flat on the ground, with toes pointing to Left
Left leg is slightly bent, at hip level or lower
Left sole faces Left Back Corner, with toes pointing up
Arms are straight and at shoulder level
Palms face the ground
Right arm and fingers point to Left Front Corner
Left arm and fingers point to Left Back Corner
Left arm and hand are above left leg
Eyes watch left hand



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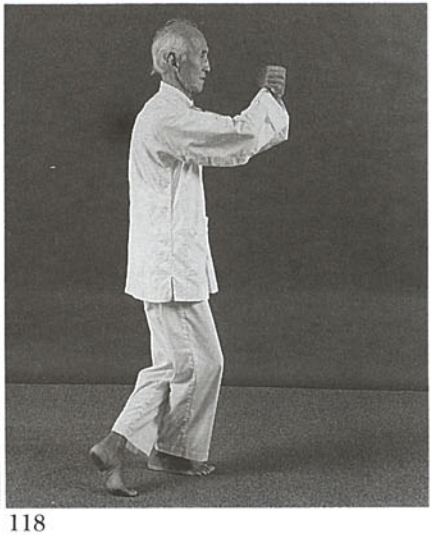

118

POSTURE 18 : *Turn Around, Kick*

Transition: Cross wrists (Fig. 118)

* Lower left leg; cross left lower leg behind right lower leg until left toes touch the ground at side of right foot
  Note: Right leg stays in position
  Left foot is as far toward Front as feels comfortable
  At the same time:
* Make a fist with left hand and bring it in front of neck, about ten inches away with palm facing body and wrist at shoulder level
  Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
* Make fist with right hand and bring it toward left hand until inside of right wrist touches and crosses inside of left wrist, with palm facing away from body
  Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
  Right foot points to Left
  Right knee is bent, with left shin-bone touching right calf
  Left toes touch the ground at outside of right foot
  Left fist and right fist are crossed at inside of wrists, in front of neck and about eight inches away from it

Wrists are at shoulder level
Right wrist is closer to body
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left

Turn Around (180 degrees) (Fig. 119)

* Turn pelvis and body counterclockwise to face Right by rotating right hip joint and pivoting right foot on heel and left foot on ball

Note: Weight stays on right foot
Arms and fists remain in position

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right
Right foot points to Right
Left toes touch the ground, about six inches away from right foot
Knees are bent; left knee is higher than right knee
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Right

Kick with Left Heel

* Raise left foot in front of body until thigh is parallel to the ground (Fig. 120)

At the same time:

* Bend left ankle and let toes point up

Note: Pelvis and body must remain upright
Sole of left foot faces Back

* Straighten left leg by extending knee and kicking with heel (Fig. 121)

Note: Left thigh stays in position
Left heel faces Right Front Corner

At the same time:

* Open hands and stretch arms by rotating shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms and hands are at shoulder level and palms point to Right Corners, with fingers pointing up slightly

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right
Right leg is bent, with foot pointing to Right
Left leg is straight at hip level or lower, with heel pointing to Right Front Corner and toes pointing up

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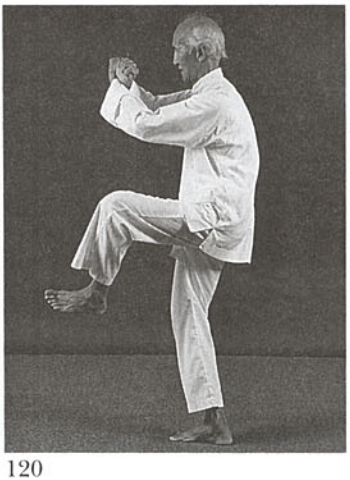

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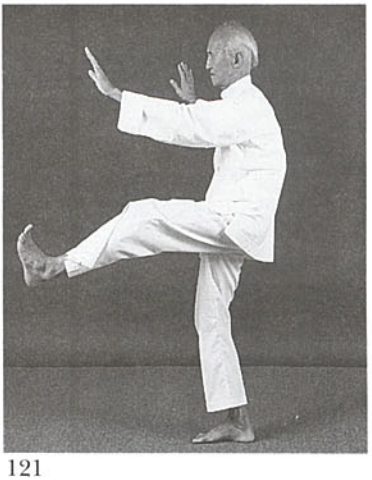

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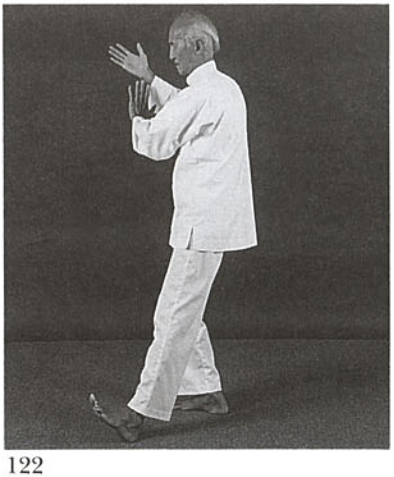


122

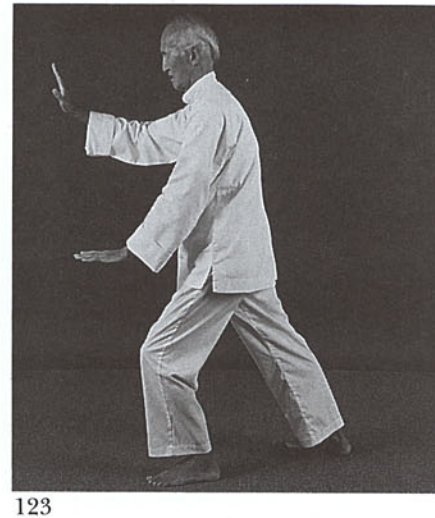
Arms are parallel to the ground
Left arm and hand are above left leg, pointing to Right Front Corner
Right arm and hand point to Right Back Corner
Eyes look to Right

POSTURE 19 : *Trample and Punch*

Lower Left Leg and Brush Left Knee

1) Lower Left Leg (Fig. 122)

✳ Lower left leg until heel touches the ground in line with right toes and about hips' width apart from right foot



123

Note: Left leg stays straight, with toes pointing up

At the same time:

* Bring right hand in front of chest with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Front
* Arc left hand toward Back until middle finger touches inside of right wrist

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

2) Brush Left Knee

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

At the same time:

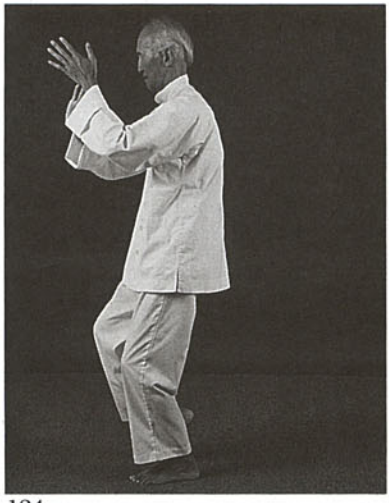
* Rotate right palm until it faces Right, with fingers pointing up

Note: Right upper arm remains in position

* Lower left arm at shoulder joint until hand is at side of left leg, halfway between left shoulder and left knee, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Right (Fig. 123)

Note: Left elbow and left wrist remain bent
Arms should not touch body

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.



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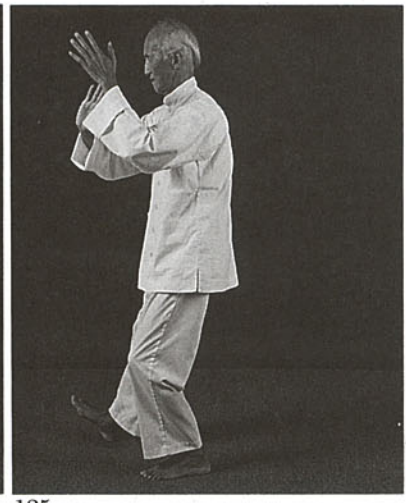

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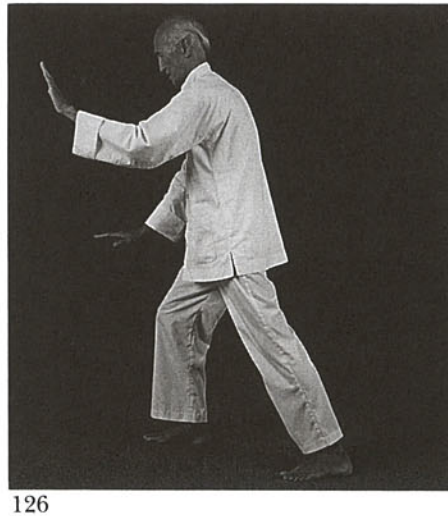

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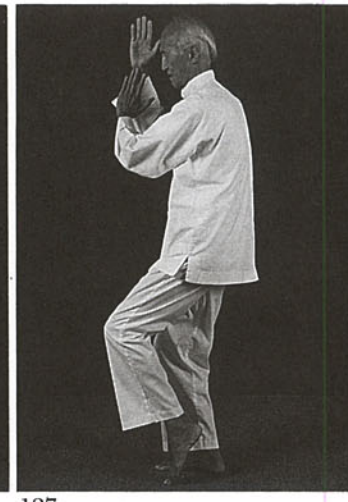


127

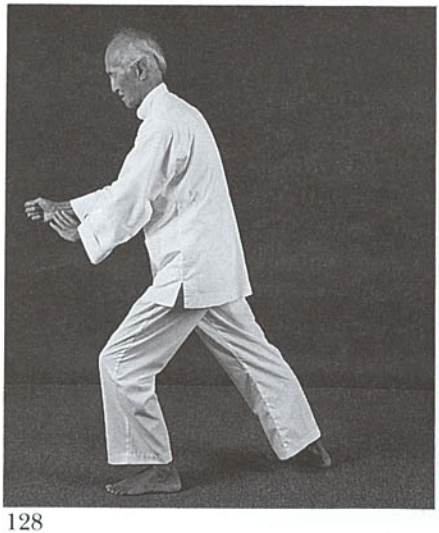
First Step Toward Right (Figs. 124–127)

1) Twist Right Step
2) Brush Right Knee

Second Step toward Right

1) Twist Left Step

These movements, First Step Toward Right, Second Step toward Right, are the same as the movements within Posture 6: Brush Knee, Twist Step (pp. 124–128). After Twist Left Step is completed, follow these next movements.



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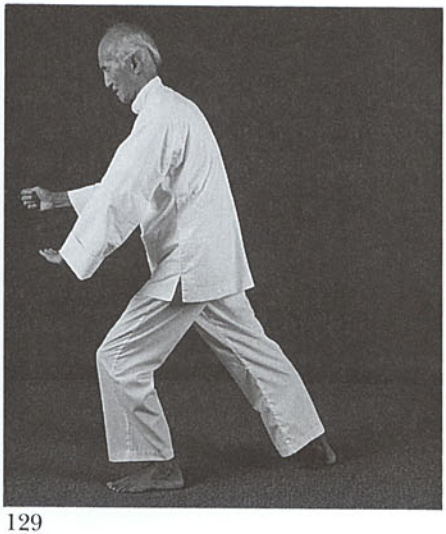


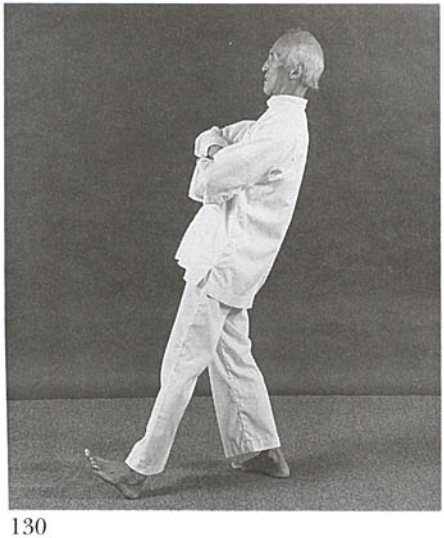
129

Trample and Punch (Fig. 128)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes
  Note: Slanting straight line extends from right heel, through leg and body to top of head
  At the same time:
* Make a fist with right hand and punch with right arm with thumb facing up by using momentum of body and extending elbow a little until fist is in front of abdomen, about eight inches from *tan-tien*
  While punching:
  Middle finger of left hand still touches inside of right wrist and follows right arm
  Inside of right fist faces Front
  Right upper arm remains in position
  Thumb is underneath fingers

Circle Motion of Hand (Fig. 129)

* By rotating shoulder joint, bring left hand in a small clockwise horizontal circle, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Right
  While rotating shoulder joint:
  Left wrist and elbow remain bent
  Right arm stays in position



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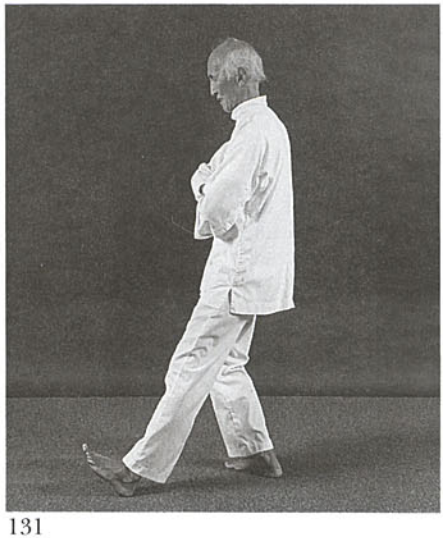


131

POSTURE 20 : *Turn Around, Raise Foot Twice*

Transition: Overlap arms

* Incline pelvis and body backward by lifting left toes, straightening left leg, and bending right knee (Fig. 130)

  Note: Left leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line, inclining backward

  At the same time:

* Bring left hand toward body until thumb lightly touches the lowest rib on right side, with palm facing down

  Note: Forearm is parallel to the ground, but does not touch body

* Bring right fist toward body until right forearm rests on left forearm, with fingers of fist touching inside of left elbow

  Note: Forearms are overlapped and parallel to the ground

  Right forearm is above left forearm

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pulling hip joints in (Fig. 131)

  Note: Arms and fist stay in position

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right
Feet point to Right
Right leg is bent
Left leg is straight, with heel touching the ground and toes pointing up
Forearms are overlapped and parallel to the ground
Right forearm is above left forearm, with fingers of fist touching inside of left elbow
Left forearm is underneath right forearm, with palm facing down and fingers touching right elbow joint
Arms are very close to body, but not touching
Eyes look to Right

Turn Around (180 degrees)

1) Turn to Back with overlapped arms

* Turn pelvis and body in a clockwise direction to face Back by rotating right hip joint and leg, and pivoting left foot on heel until toes naturally touch the ground and point to Left Back Corner (Fig. 132)

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Back
Arms stay in position
Weight stays on right foot
Right knee remains bent
Left leg remains straight

2) Turn to Left Back Corner with overlapped arms (Fig. 133)

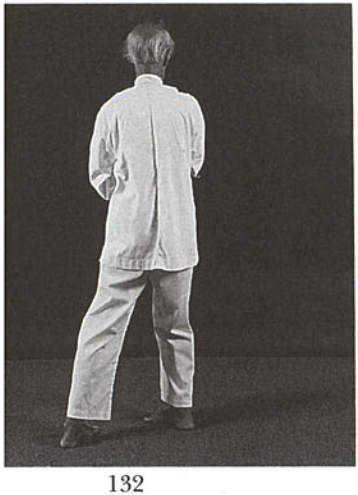
* Shift weight to left foot by lifting right toes, straightening right leg, and bending left knee

Note: Pelvis and body will naturally turn to Left Back Corner
Pelvis and body remain upright
Left foot remains pointing to Left Back Corner
Right toes will naturally point to Left Back Corner
Arms stay in position

3) Turn to Left with palm resting on fist (Fig. 134)

* Bring pelvis and body to Left by pivoting left hip joint and moving right heel about twelve inches toward Front

Note: Left foot remains pointing to Left Back Corner
Right heel touches the ground, with toes up and pointing to Left



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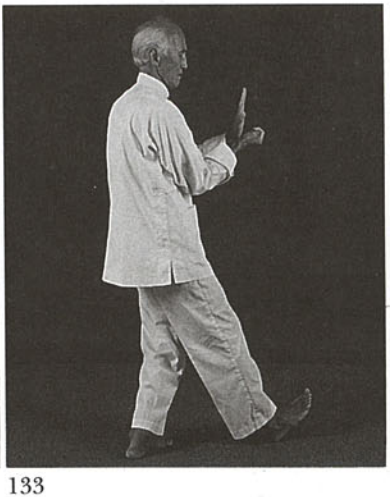

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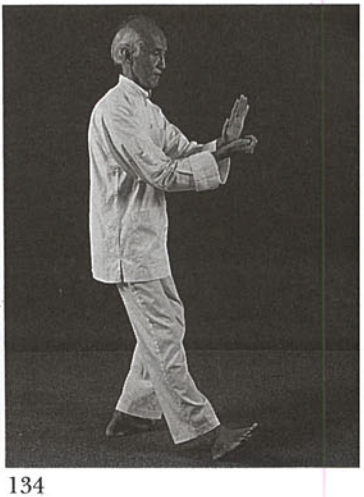


134

Right heel is in line with left toes about hips' width apart
Weight stays on left foot

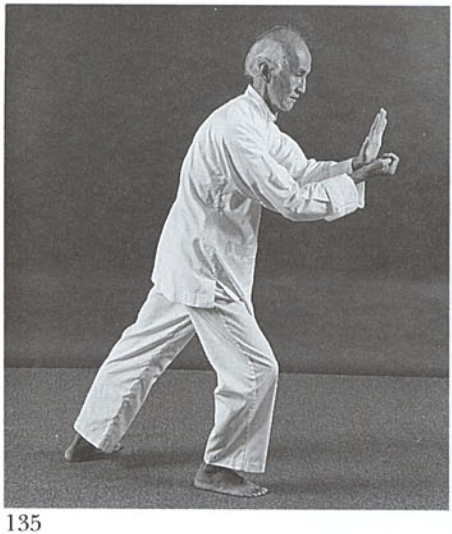
At the same time:

* Bend left wrist up until fingers point upward, with little finger touching inside of right elbow joint
  Note: Right arm remains in position
* Bring right fist in front of chest until fingers of fist face up and forearm is parallel to the ground
  Note: Right fist is about ten inches away from chest
* Slide heel of left palm forward until it touches heel of right fist, with fingers pointing up
  Note: Arms cross at inside of wrists in front of chest, about ten inches away

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Left foot points to Left Back Corner
Right foot points to Left, with toes up
Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Right fist is palm up in front of chest, about ten inches away
Left palm rests on right wrist, facing Left Front Corner with fingers pointing up
Upper arms should not touch body



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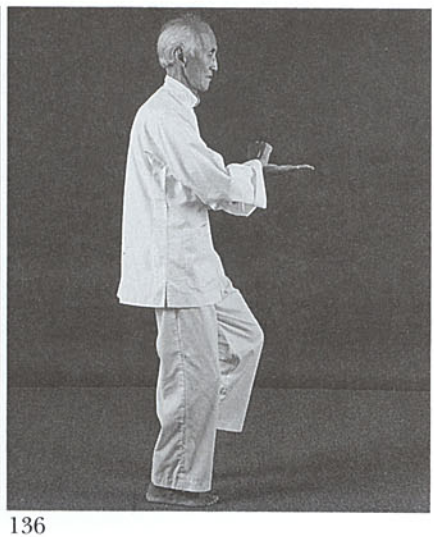


136

Raise Left Foot

1) Lean Forward with palm resting on fist (Fig. 135)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lowering right toes

Note: Arms and hands stay in position

2) Bring Body Upright, rotate palm and fist (Fig. 136)

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward

At the same time:

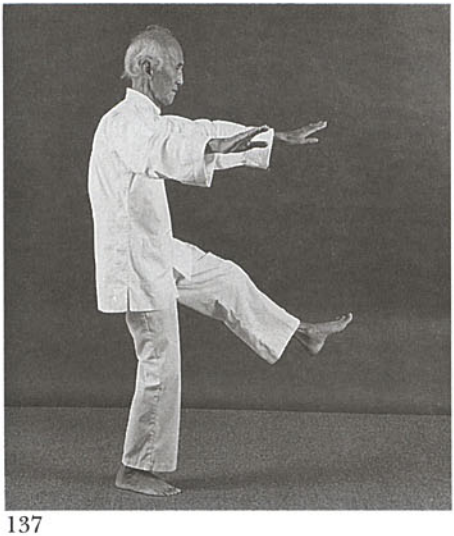
* Turn left palm over until palm faces up
* Bring right fist on top of left hand by following left palm as it turns over
* Also bring left foot forward even with right foot, with toes touching the ground

Note: Left forearm is parallel to the ground
Left hand is in front of chest about ten inches away from it
Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm with fingers pointing to Left Front Corner
Heel of right fist rests on heel of left palm
Right wrist is bent, with fist pointing up and facing Left Back Corner

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

3) Raise Left Foot (Fig. 137)

* Immediately raise left foot by rotating left hip joint until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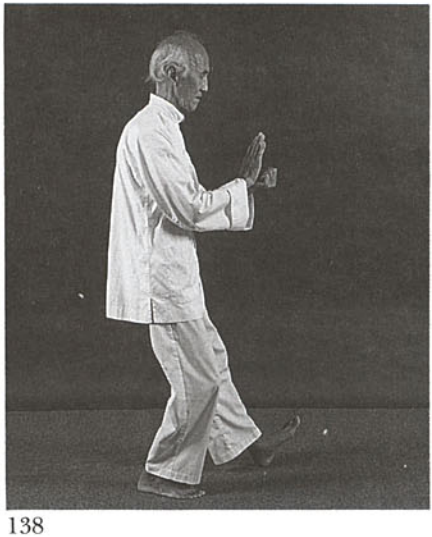

138

a slanting straight line extends from left toes through ankle and leg up to hip joint, with toes pointing down and to Left Back Corner

At the same time:

* Open right fist and straighten both arms by rotating shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms and hands are at shoulder level and fingers point to Left Corners, with palms facing the ground

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left

Right leg is slightly bent

Right foot is flat on the ground, with toes pointing to Left

Left leg is straight, at hip level or lower

Left toes and left leg form a straight line, with toes pointing to Left Back Corner

Arms are straight, parallel to the ground with palms facing the ground

Right arm and fingers point to Left Front Corner

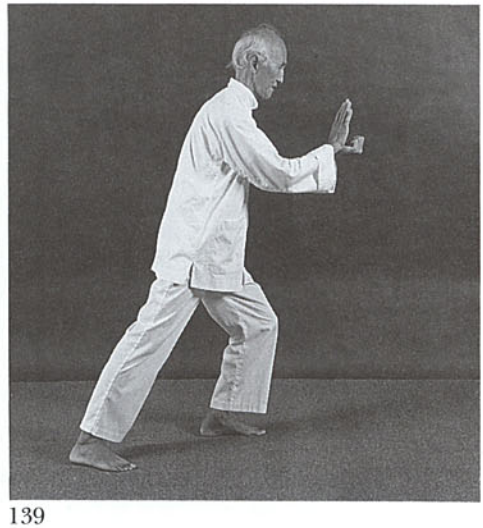
Left arm and fingers point to Left Back Corner

Left arm and hand are above left leg

Eyes watch right hand

Raise Right Foot

* Lower left foot from hip joint until heel naturally touches the ground with toes pointing up (Fig. 138)



139

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
Left heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart

At the same time:

* Make a fist with left hand and bring it back until it is about ten inches in front of chest, with palm facing up and fingers pointing to Left Front Corner

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
Left forearm is parallel to the ground

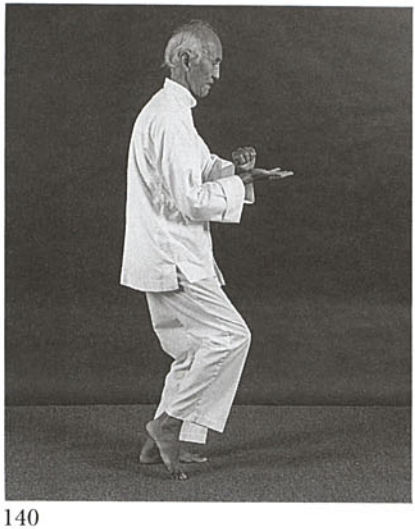
* Bring right palm back until heel of right palm rests on heel of left fist, with palm facing Left Back Corner and fingers pointing up

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
Eyes look to Left

1) Lean Forward—with palm resting on fist (Fig. 139)

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

Note: Right leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line, leaning forward and facing Left
Feet point to Left in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Left knee is bent; right leg is straight
Inside of left fist is palm-up in front of chest, about ten inches away with knuckles pointing to Left Front Corner
Right palm rests on left wrist, facing Left Back Corner with fingers pointing up



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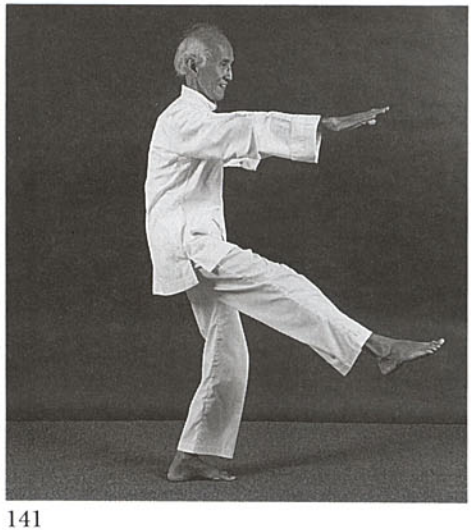


141

2) Bring Body Upright—rotate palm and fist (Fig. 140)

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward

At the same time:

* Turn right palm over until palm faces up
* Bring left fist on top of right hand by following right palm as it turns over
* Bring right foot forward even with left foot, with only the toes touching the ground

Note: Right forearm is parallel to the ground
Right hand is in front of chest, about ten inches away from it
Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm with fingers pointing to Left Back Corner
Heel of left fist rests on heel of right palm
Left wrist is bent, with knuckles pointing up, and facing Left Front Corner

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

3) Raise Right Foot (Fig. 141)

* Immediately raise right foot by rotating right hip joint until a slanting straight line extends from right toes, through ankle and leg, and up to hip joint, with toes pointing to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

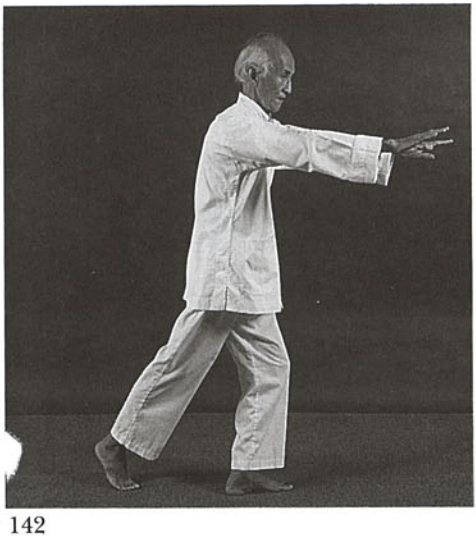
* Open left fist and straighten both arms by rotating

shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms are at shoulder level and fingers point to Left Corners, with palms facing the ground
When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Left leg is bent
Left foot is flat on the ground with toes pointing to Left
Right leg is straight at hip level or lower
Right toes and right leg form a straight line, with toes pointing to Left Front Corner
Arms are straight and parallel to the ground, with palms facing the ground
Left arm and fingers point to Left Back Corner
Right arm and fingers point to Left Front Corner
Right arm and hand are above right leg
Eyes watch right hand

POSTURE 21 : *Retreat, Step on Tiger*

Retreat, Turn to Front

* Lower right foot backward in an arc toward Right Back Corner until toes touch the ground to the left and back of left heel, about hips' width apart (Fig. 142)
  Note: Left knee stays bent, with toes pointing to Left
  Right knee is slightly bent
  Right toes are in line with left heel, pointing to Left Front Corner
* Shift weight to right foot and turn pelvis and body to face Front by lowering right heel, bending right knee, and rotating right hip joint
  Note: Right foot should point to Front
  At the same time:
* Lift left toes, straighten left leg, and let left foot naturally follow pelvis; turn body to Front
  At the same time:
* Let arms follow pelvis and body as they turn to Front
* Bring right upper arm to a vertical position and forearm parallel to the ground at side of body, with palm facing up and fingers pointing to Front
  Note: Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm



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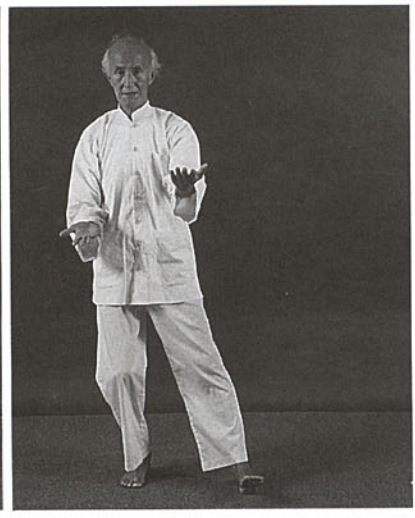


143

✳ Bring left arm to Front, until upper arm forms a forty-five-degree angle with body and forearm is parallel to the ground, with palm facing up and fingers pointing to Front (Fig. 143)

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Right knee is bent, with foot pointing to Front
Left leg is straight, with toes up and pointing to Front
Left heel is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart
Right upper arm is in vertical position
Left upper arm forms a forty-five degree angle to body
Forearms are parallel to the ground
Right forearm is lower than left forearm
Both palms face up
All fingers are pointing to Front
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Front

Retreat, Turn to Left

The following movements are similar to the previous movements, except left limbs and right limbs are switched and the movements end by facing Left.

* Bring left foot backward in an arc toward Right Back Corner until toes touch the ground to the right and back of right heel, about hips' width apart (Fig. 144)

  Note: Right knee stays bent, with toes pointing to Front
  Left knee is slightly bent
  Left toes are in line with right heel, pointing to Left Front Corner

* Shift weight to left foot and turn pelvis and body to face Left by lowering left heel, bending left knee, and rotating left hip joint

  Note: Left foot should point to Left

  At the same time:

* Lift right toes, straighten right leg, and let right foot naturally follow pelvis and body, turning counterclockwise to Left

  At the same time:

* Let arms follow pelvis and body as they turn to Left; bring left upper arm to a vertical position with forearm parallel to the ground at side of body, palm facing up, and fingers pointing to Left

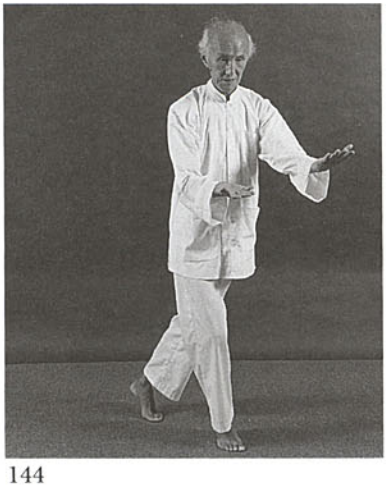
  Note: Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm

* Bring right arm to Left until upper arm forms a forty-five-degree angle with body and forearm is parallel to the ground, with palm facing down and fingers pointing to Left (Fig. 145)

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
  Left knee is bent, with foot pointing to Left
  Right leg is straight, with toes up pointing to Left
  Right heel is in line with left toes about hips' width apart
  Left upper arm is in vertical position
  Right upper arm forms a forty-five-degree angle with body
  Forearms are parallel to the ground
  Left forearm is lower than right forearm
  Left palm faces up, right palm faces down
  Left fingers point left, right point up slightly
  Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
  Eyes look to Left



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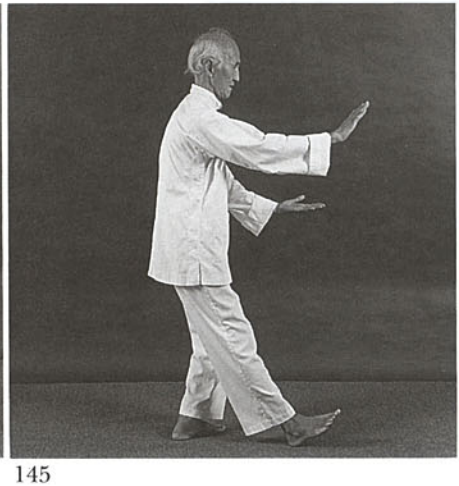

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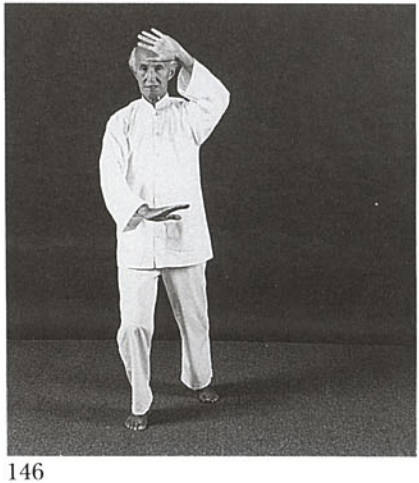


146

Step on Tiger

* Turn pelvis and body to Back by rotating left hip joint and pivoting right heel until right toes naturally touch the ground and point to Back

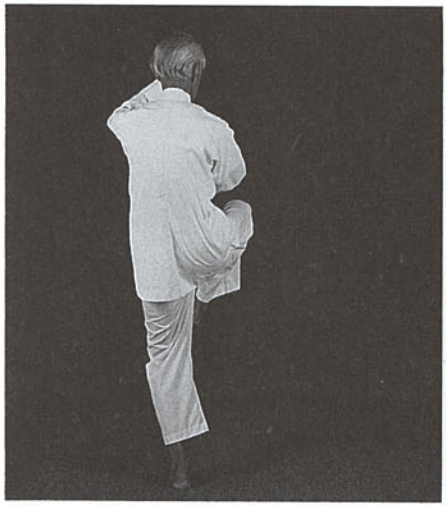
  Note: Left leg is straight, with foot pointing to Back
  Right leg is bent, with foot pointing to Back

  At the same time:

* Let right palm naturally follow right foot to Back until it is in front of navel, about six inches away with palm facing down and fingers pointing to Right Back Corner

  Note: Right arm is bent slightly

* Bring left palm up in front of forehead, about six inches away with palm facing Back (Fig. 146, view from Back)



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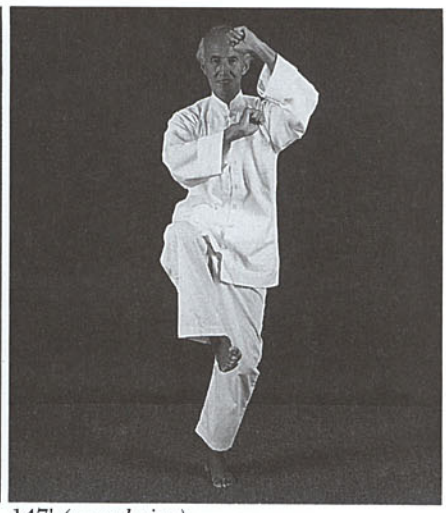


147' *(second view)*

Note: Left arm remains bent

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes

Note: Left foot will naturally turn on heel to point to Back
Pelvis and body remain upright

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

At the same time:

* Let both palms follow pelvis, lean body forward and press downward slightly

Note: Right leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line, leaning forward

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward while arms remain in position
* Bring right foot in front of groin and lift right toes upward as if stepping on a tiger's body

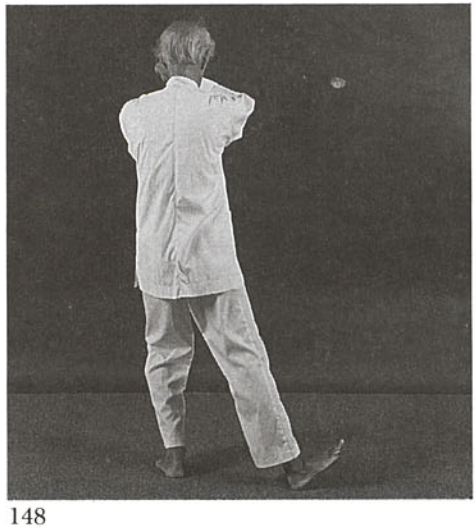
At the same time:

* Make fists with both hands, with knuckles of left fist facing Back and knuckles of right fist facing down (Figs. 147, 147')

Note: Arms stay in position
Thumbs are underneath fingers

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Back



148

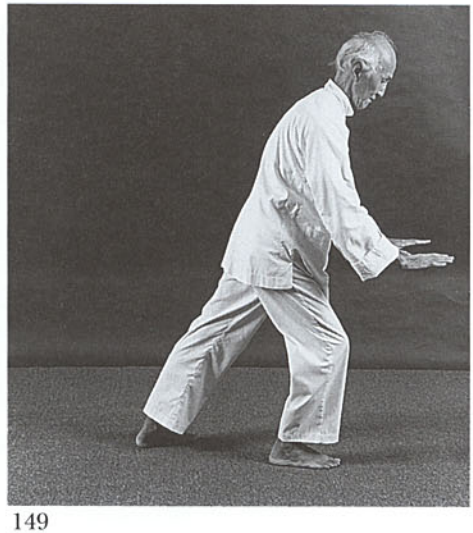
Left foot is flat on the ground, with toes pointing to Back
Left leg is bent, weight is on left foot
Right leg is bent
Right foot is in front of groin, with toes pointing up
Right fist is in front of chest, about six inches away with knuckles facing down
Left fist is in front of forehead, about six inches away with knuckles facing Back
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Spirit is lifted, as if the head is suspended from above
Eyes look to Back

POSTURE 22 : *Strike Ears with Fists*

Turn to Left Back Corner (Fig. 148)

✳ Lower right foot by straightening right leg with toes still pointing up in an arc toward Left and Front until heel touches the ground, about hips' width away from left heel

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left Back Corner
Left foot remains pointing to Back
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight



149

Right heel is about hips' width away from left heel, with toes pointing up and facing Left
Arms and hands remain in position

Turn to Left (Fig. 149)

* Turn pelvis and body to Left by straightening left leg, bending right knee, lowering right toes, and rotating right hip joint clockwise

At the same time:

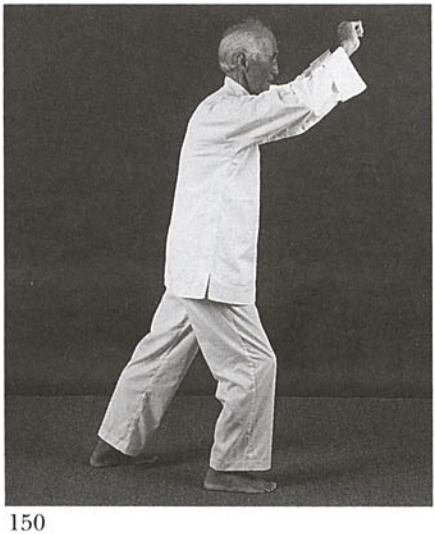
* Lift left toes slightly and let left foot naturally follow right hip joint, pivoting to Left

Note: Pelvis and body lean forward in a slanting straight line, facing Left
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart

At the same time:

* Let arms follow pelvis and body as they turn to Left
* Open both fists and press heels of palms toward the ground by rotating shoulder joints

Note: Pelvis and body lean forward in a slanting straight line, facing Left
Arms are slightly bent, parallel to each other and shoulders' width apart



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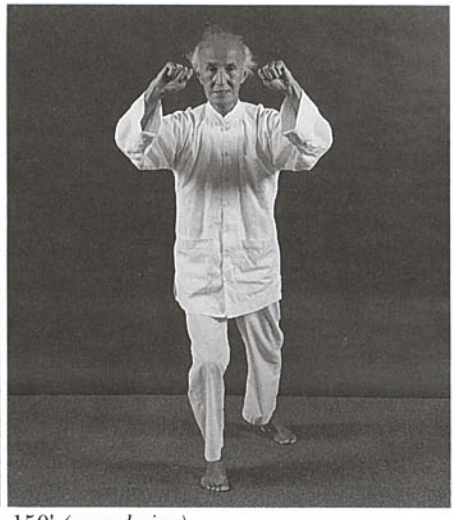


150' *(second view)*

Palms face the ground
Heel of right palm is above right knee and toes
Fingers are straight, pointing to Left
Eyes watch hands

Strike Ears with Fists (Figs. 150, 150')

* Gradually make a fist with both hands and raise fists to shoulder level
  Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
* Continue to raise fists in an upward, inward arc until knuckles of index fingers face each other, about a head's width apart at ear level as if using the knuckles of index fingers to strike opponent's ears
  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body lean forward in a slanting straight line, facing Left
  Feet point to Left in a Bow-and-Arrow step
  Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
  Arms are bent
  Palms of fists face Left
  Knuckles of index fingers face each other, heads' width apart at ear level, about twelve inches away from face
  Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
  Eyes look to Left

POSTURE 23 : *Turn Body, Kick with Toes, Kick with Heel*

Turn Body—turn to Front (Fig. 151)

* Pivot right foot on ball until it points to Front by rotating right hip joint clockwise

  Note: Left leg remains in position
  Pelvis and body naturally move to an upright position, facing Left Front Corner

  At the same time:

* By rotating shoulder joints and lowering elbows inward, cross fists at inside of wrists in front of body, with wrists at shoulder level, about ten inches away from neck

  Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left Front Corner
  Right leg is bent, with toes pointing to Front
  Left leg is straight, with toes pointing to Left
  Fists are crossed at inside of wrists, at shoulder level
  Thumb is underneath fingers
  Knuckles of right fist face Left Front Corner
  Knuckles of left fist face Right Back Corner
  Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
  Eyes look to Left Front Corner

Kick with Left Toes (Fig. 152)

* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint

  Note: Weight stays on right foot

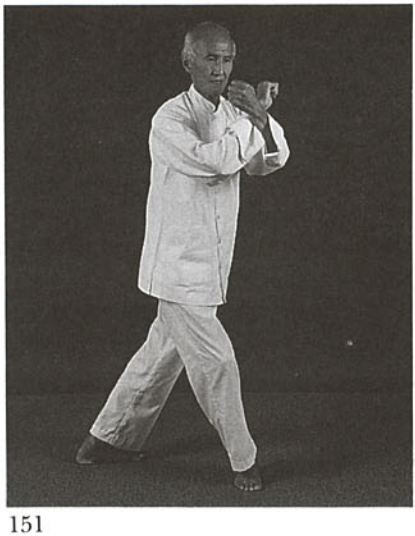
  At the same time:

* By using momentum of turning body as if kicking with toes, raise left foot in front of body with toes pointing down until toes, ankle, and leg are in a slanting straight line, pointing to Left Front Corner

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Front
  Left thigh, lower leg, and foot form a slanting straight line

* Open hands and stretch arms by rotating shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms and hands are at shoulder level and fingers point to Front Corners, with palms facing the ground

  Note: Left arm is above left leg



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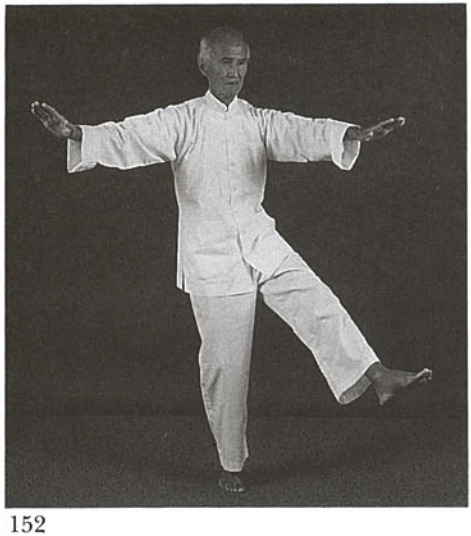

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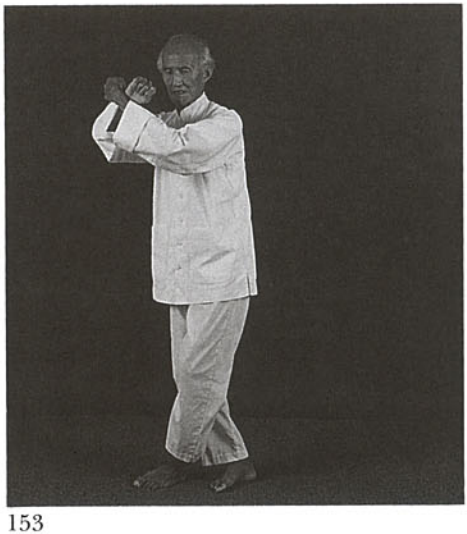


153

Turn Body (270 degrees)

* Lower left leg and bring left foot in front of and to the right side of right foot, with toes touching the ground about ten inches away

  Note: Lower legs are crossed, with left calf touching right shin bone

  At the same time:

* Make fists with both hands, and by rotating shoulder joint and bringing elbows inward, cross fists at inside of wrists about ten inches away from neck (Fig. 153)

Note: Thumb is underneath fingers
Knuckles of right fist faces Front
Knuckles of left fist faces Back

* By rotating right hip joint, pivoting on right ball, and keeping weight on right foot, turn pelvis and body in a clockwise direction 270 degrees, until they face Left

At the same time:

* Let left toes naturally turn with pelvis and body as they turn to Left, and immediately lower left heel, bend left knee, and shift weight to left foot

After turning:

* Right knee remains bent, with only the toes touching the ground (Fig. 154)

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Left
Entire left foot touches the ground, with toes pointing to Left Back Corner
Toes of right foot touch the ground
Knees are bent, right knee is higher than left knee
Arms remain in position, fists remain crossed
Weight is on left foot

Practice these movements several times until you can keep your body balanced.

Kick with Right Heel

* Raise right foot in front of body until thigh is parallel to the ground, with ankle bent and toes up (Fig. 155)

Note: Pelvis and body must remain upright, facing Left
Sole of right foot faces Left Back Corner

* Straighten right leg by extending knee and kicking with heel

Note: Right heel faces Left Front Corner

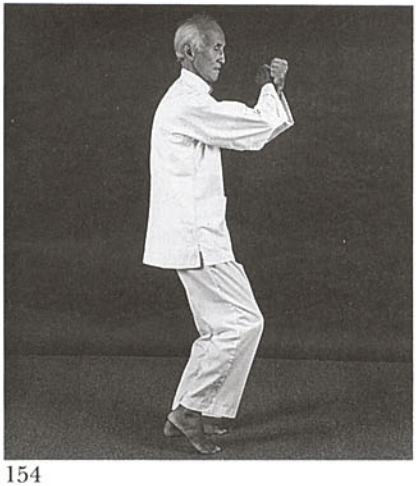
At the same time:

* Open hands and stretch arms by rotating shoulder joints and extending elbows until arms and hands are at shoulder level and fingers point to Left Corners, with palms facing the ground (Fig. 156)

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Left leg is bent; left foot points to Left



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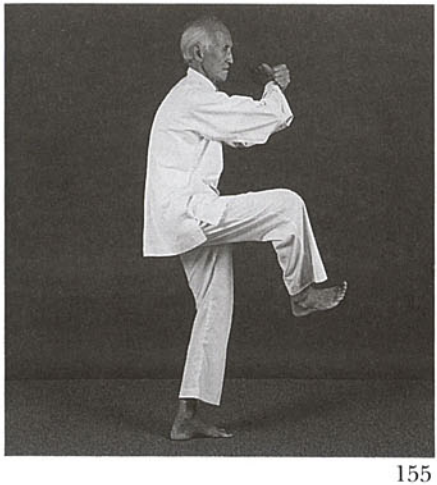

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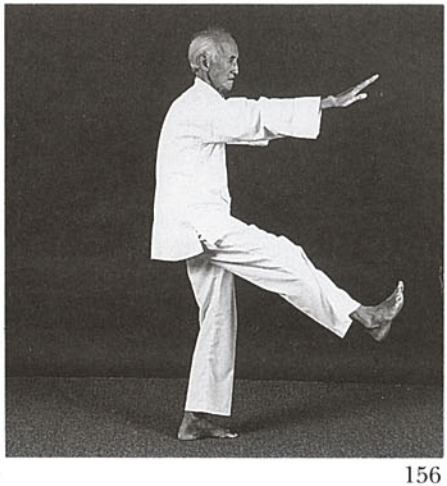


156

Right leg is slightly bent, at hip level or lower, with heel pointing to Left Front Corner and toes pointing up
Arms are parallel to the ground
Right arm and hand are straight, pointing to Left Front Corner and above right leg
Left arm and hand are straight, pointing to Left Back Corner; palms face the ground
Eyes look to Left Front Corner

Kick with Right Heel is the same as Posture 18: Turn Around, Kick with Left Heel on page 168, except that left limbs and right limbs are switched and the movements are performed in the opposite direction.

POSTURE 24 : *Wild Horse Splits Mane*

Four corners of this posture are performed alternately with four corners of Posture 25.

Transition: Lower right leg (Fig. 157)

* Lower right leg and move it behind left leg until right foot is naturally flat on the ground, with toes in line with left heel about hips' width apart

  Note: Left leg remains bent, pointing to Left
  Right foot is flat on the ground, with toes pointing to Left
  Right leg is still straight, about hips' width away from left leg
  Pelvis and body lean forward, forming a slanting straight line with right leg

  At the same time:

* Move both arms toward each other until they are in front of shoulders at shoulder level, and parallel to each other with palms facing down

  Note: Arms remain straight, pointing to Left

Split Mane at Left Back Corner

1) Turn to Left Back Corner

* Pivot left foot counterclockwise on ball until it points to Left Back Corner by rotating left hip joint

  Note: Pelvis and body naturally turn to Left Back Corner

  At the same time:

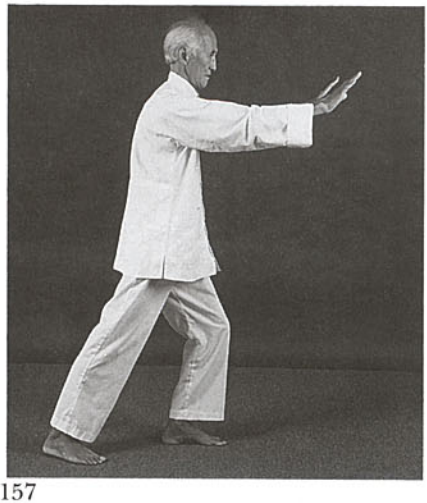
* Bend left wrist and bring left hand in front of right shoulder until palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up (Fig. 158)
* Lower right hand in a downward arc to opposite side of body until palm faces Right Back Corner, about four inches away from left thigh and halfway between left knee and left elbow

  At the same time:

* Pivot right foot on heel until toes point to Left Back Corner by rotating left hip joint (Fig. 159)

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body lean toward Left Front Corner, facing Left Back Corner in a slanting straight line with right leg



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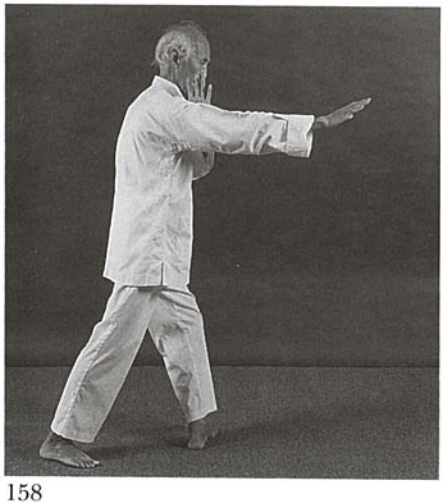

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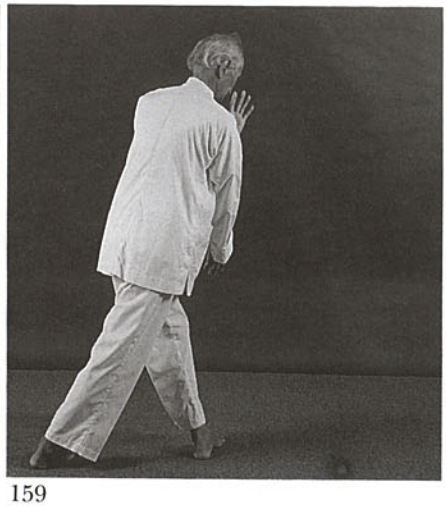


159

Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Back Corner
Legs are crossed
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Arms are crossed
Left arm is bent, with palm in front of right shoulder
Left palm is bent at wrist, facing Left Front Corner
Right arm is straight and crosses body
Right wrist is at side of left thigh, about four inches away
Right palm faces Right Back Corner
Right forearm should not touch body
Weight is on left foot
Eyes look to Left Back Corner

2) Shift Weight and Split Arms

* Move right foot in a straight line toward Left Front Corner until right leg is straight and right foot naturally touches the ground, parallel to left foot and slightly wider than hips' width apart (Fig. 160)

  Note: Left leg remains bent
  Right leg remains straight
  Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Back Corner
  Arms remain in position

* Shift weight to right leg by straightening left leg and bending right knee (Fig. 161)

  Note: Right shoulder is above right knee and toes
  A slanting straight line extends from left foot through leg and side of body to top of head

At the same time:

* Bring right arm diagonally upward and to right side of body in a straight line until hand is at ear level

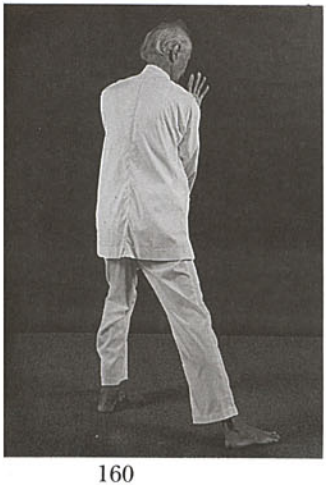
  Note: Right arm is slightly bent, with hand at ear level
  Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
  Right palm is slanting at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up
  Right fingers point to Left

* Bring left arm diagonally downward and to left side of body in a straight line until palm is at side of left thigh, about twelve inches away, halfway between left knee and left shoulder (Fig. 162)

  Note: Pelvis and body incline to Left Front Corner, facing Left Back Corner
  Left palm faces down with fingers up, pointing to Back

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body face Left Back Corner in a slanting straight line with left leg
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Back Corner
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Right elbow is above right knee and toes
Right arm is slightly bent, with palm at ear level
Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
Right palm is slanting at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up
Right fingers point to Left
Left arm is slightly bent, with palm facing down
Left hand is about twelve inches away from left thigh with fingers up, pointing to Back



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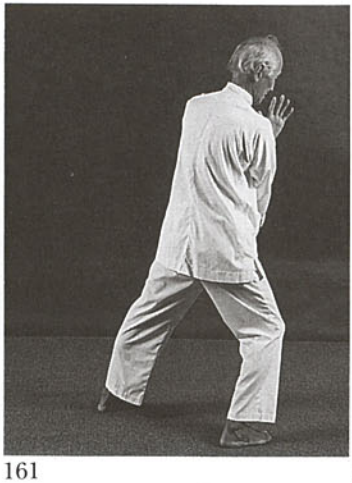

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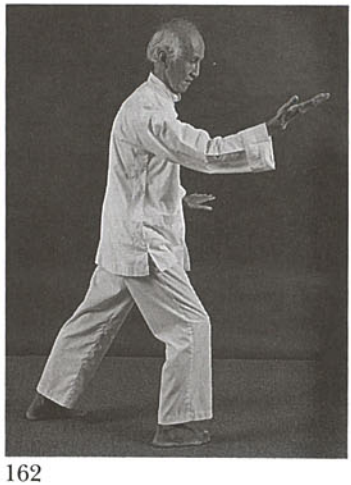

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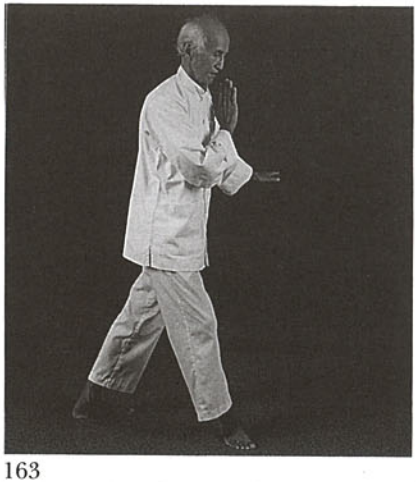


163

Left palm is halfway between left knee and left shoulder
Eyes watch left hand

Split Mane at Left Front Corner

1) Turn to Left Front Corner

* Pivot right foot on ball until it points to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint clockwise

Note: Pelvis and body naturally turn to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

* Bend right wrist and bring right hand in front of left shoulder until palm faces Left Back Corner, with fingers pointing up (Fig. 163)

* Lower left hand in a downward arc to opposite side of body, until palm faces Right Front Corner, about four inches away from right thigh and halfway between right knee and right elbow

At the same time:

* Pivot left foot on heel until toes point to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint (Fig. 164)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean toward Left Back Corner, facing Left Front Corner in a slanting straight line with left leg
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Front Corner
Legs are crossed; right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Arms are crossed
Right arm is bent, with palm in front of left shoulder
Right hand is bent at wrist, facing Left Back Corner
Left arm is straight and crosses body
Left wrist is at side of right thigh, about four inches away
Left palm faces Right Front Corner
Left forearm does not touch body
Weight is on right foot
Eyes look to Left Front Corner

2) Shift Weight and Split Arms

* Move left foot in a straight line toward Left Back Corner until left leg remains straight and left foot naturally touches the ground, parallel to right foot and slightly wider than hips' width apart

Note: Right leg remains bent
Left leg remains straight
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Front Corner
Arms remain in position

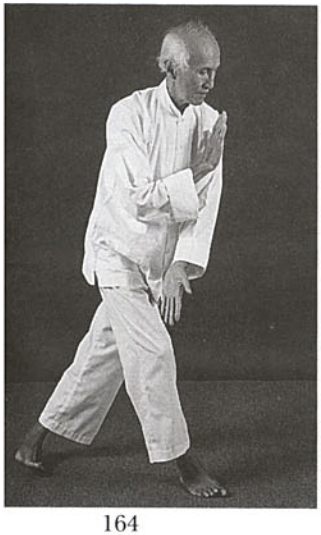
* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg and bending left knee (Fig. 165)

Note: Left shoulder is above left knee and toes
A slanting straight line extends from right foot, through leg and side of body, to top of head

At the same time:

* Bring left arm diagonally upward and to left side of body in a straight line until hand is at neck level (Fig. 166)

Note: Left arm is slightly bent with hand at neck level
Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
Left palm is slanting at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up; left fingers point to Left



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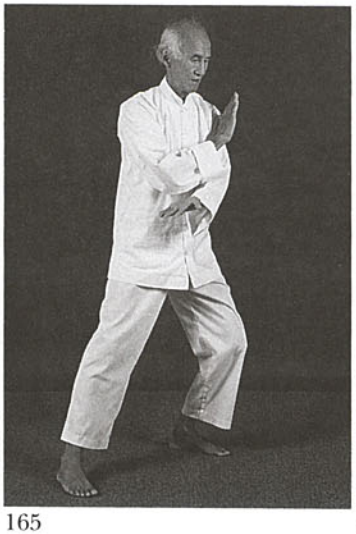

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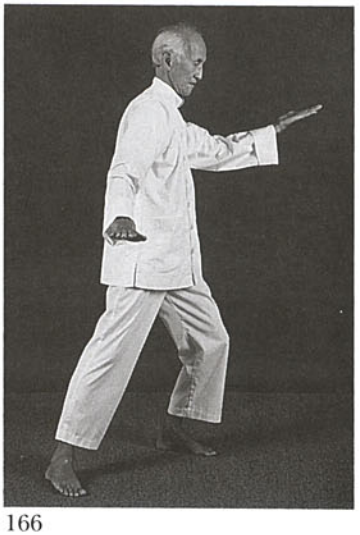


166

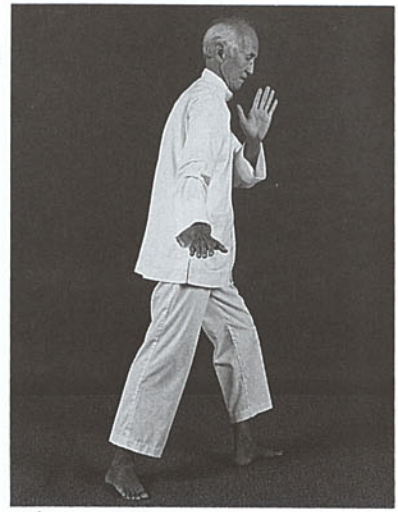
* Bring right arm diagonally downward and to right side of body in a straight line until palm is at side of right thigh, about twelve inches away, halfway between right knee and right shoulder

Note: Pelvis and body incline to Left Back Corner, facing Left Front Corner
Right palm faces down with fingers up, pointing to Front

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body face Left Front Corner, in a slanting straight line with right leg
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Front Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Left elbow is above left knee and toes
Left arm is slightly bent, with palm at neck level
Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
Left palm slants at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up
Left fingers point to Left
Right arm is slightly bent, with palm facing down
Right hand is about twelve inches away from right thigh, with fingers up, pointing to Front
Right palm is halfway between right knee and right shoulder
Eyes watch right hand



167

POSTURE 25 : *Jade Lady Works at Shuttle*

Four corners of this posture are performed alternately with four corners of Posture 24.

Work at Left Front Corner

1) Turn to Left Back Corner

* Pivot left foot on ball until it points to Left Back Corner by rotating left hip joint counterclockwise

Note: Pelvis and body will naturally turn to Left Back Corner

At the same time:

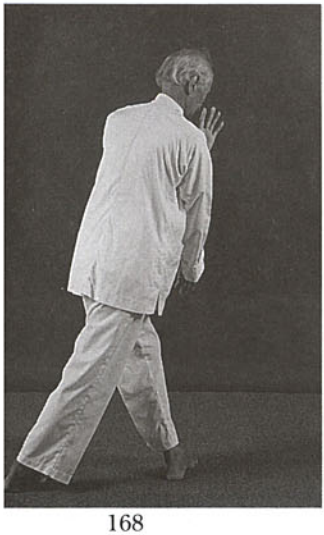
* Bend left wrist and bring left hand in front of right shoulder until palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up (Fig. 167)
* Lower right hand in a downward arc to opposite side of body until palm faces Right Back Corner, about four inches away from left thigh and halfway between left knee and left elbow

At the same time:

* Pivot right foot on heel until right toes point to Left Back Corner by rotating left hip joint (Fig. 168)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean toward Left Front Corner, facing Left Back Corner in a slanting straight line with right leg



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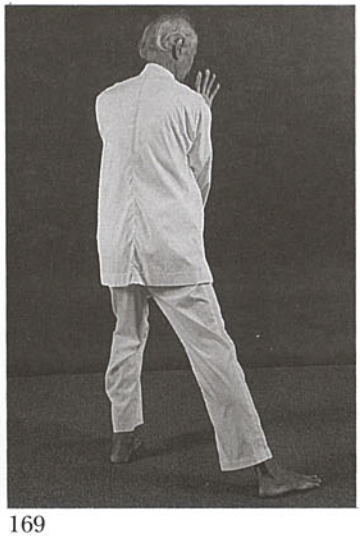

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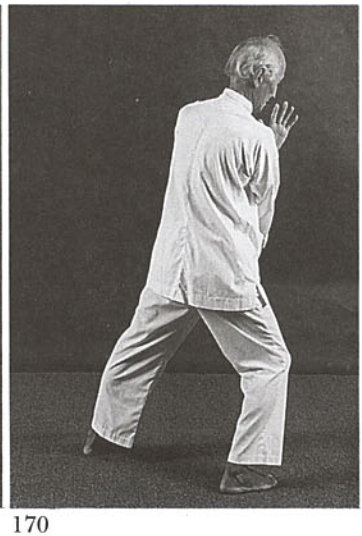


170

Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Back Corner
Legs are crossed
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Arms are crossed
Left arm is bent, with palm in front of right shoulder
Left palm is bent at wrist, facing Left Front Corner
Right arm is straight and crosses body
Right wrist is at side of left thigh about four inches away
Right palm faces Right Back Corner
Right forearm should not touch body
Weight is on left foot
Eyes look to Left Back Corner

2) Work at Left Front Corner

* Move right foot in a straight line toward Left Front Corner until right leg remains straight and right foot naturally touches the ground, parallel to left foot and slightly wider than hips' width apart (Fig. 169)

  Note: Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Back Corner, and slightly wider than hips' width apart
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  Arms remain in position

* Shift weight to right leg by straightening left leg and bending right knee (Fig. 170)

  Note: Pelvis and body still face Left Back Corner
  A slanting straight line extends from left heel through leg and body to top of head

Right shoulder is above right knee and toes
Arms remain in position

* Pivot left foot on heel until left foot points to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint

At the same time:

* Move right hand upward toward Left and Front until wrist is in front of chest and at shoulder level, with palm facing up and fingers pointing to Left Back Corner
* Bring left hand forward until middle finger touches inside of right wrist, with palm facing down (Fig. 171)

Note: Right foot stays in position
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left Front Corner
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Right foot points to Left Back Corner
Left foot points to Left Front Corner
Right elbow is above right knee
Right palm extends straight from arm, facing up
Right hand is in front of chest
Eyes watch right hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lifting right toes (Fig. 172)

Note: Right toes will naturally lift up, pointing to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

* Turn right palm to face Left Front Corner
* Turn left palm to face Right Back Corner

Note: Middle finger of left hand still touches inside of right wrist
Right wrist is in front of neck
Right forearm and upper arm form a ninety-degree angle
Left palm extends straight from forearm

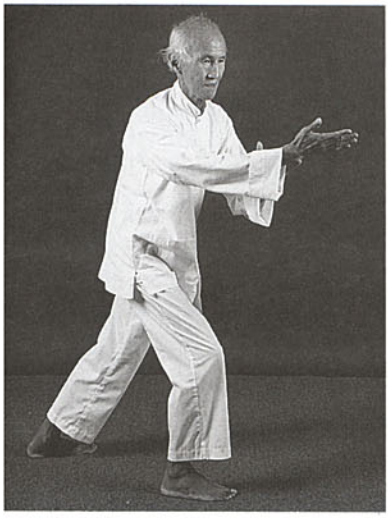
* Incline backward at pelvis as much as you can

Note: Waist stays straight

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lowering right toes

At the same time:

* Bring right palm in front of shoulder, with palm still



171

172

173

facing Left Front Corner and wrist at shoulder level by rotating shoulder joints and lowering elbows

✳ Lower left arm at shoulder joint until it is twelve inches in front of left thigh, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left Front Corner (Fig. 173)

Note: Left wrist is halfway between right elbow and right knee

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step, facing Left Front Corner

Right knee is bent; left leg is straight

Right arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level

Right palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

Left arm is bent, with hand in front of left thigh, about twelve inches away

Left wrist is half way between left shoulder and left knee

Left palm faces the ground, with fingers pointing to Left Front Corner

Eyes look to Left Front Corner

Transition: Split Mane at Left Back Corner

1) Turn to Left Back Corner

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lifting right toes

At the same time:

* Bend left wrist and bring left hand in front of right shoulder until palm faces Right Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

Note: Right toes point up, facing Left Front Corner
Hand and elbow do not touch body
Left palm faces Right Front Corner
Fingers point up

* Lower right hand to opposite side of body in a downward arc until palm faces Left Back Corner, about four inches away from left thigh, halfway between left knee and left elbow (Fig. 174)
* By rotating left hip joint, pivot right foot on heel until right toes point to Left Back Corner (Fig. 175)

Note: Pelvis and body will naturally become upright, facing Left Back Corner
Left leg stays bent, with toes pointing to Left Front Corner
Right leg stays straight, with toes pointing to Left Back Corner
Arms stay in position
Left palm follows turning body to face Left Front Corner
Right palm follows turning body to face Right Back Corner
Left wrist is in front of right shoulder
Right wrist is at side of left thigh, about four inches away
Right arm remains straight
Right forearm should not touch body

2) Shift Weight and Split Arms (Fig. 176)

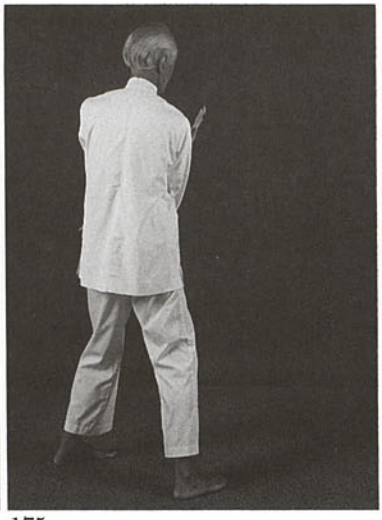
* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee

Note: Left foot stays in position

At the same time:

* Bring right arm diagonally upward and to right side of body in a straight line until hand is at ear level

174



175

176

Note: Right arm is slightly bent
Right palm stays in position, naturally slanting at a forty-five-degree angle and facing up

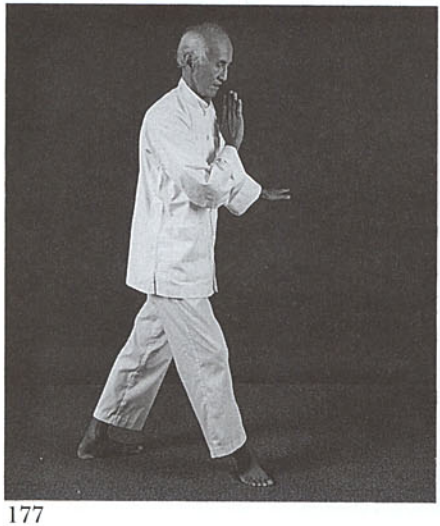
✳ Bring left arm diagonally downward and to left side of body in a straight line until palm is at side of left thigh, about twelve inches away and halfway between left knee and left shoulder

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body face Left Back Corner in a slanting straight line with left leg
Right foot points to Left Back Corner
Left foot points to Left
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Right arm is slightly bent, with palm at ear level
Right hand is straight, as an extension of forearm
Right palm slants at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up
Left arm is slightly bent, with palm facing down and fingers pointing up
Left palm is halfway between left knee and left shoulder
Left hand is about twelve inches away from thigh
Eyes watch left hand without bending neck

Work at Left Back Corner

The following movements are similar to Work at Left Front Corner, except right limbs and left limbs, Left Back Corner and Left Front Corner are switched.



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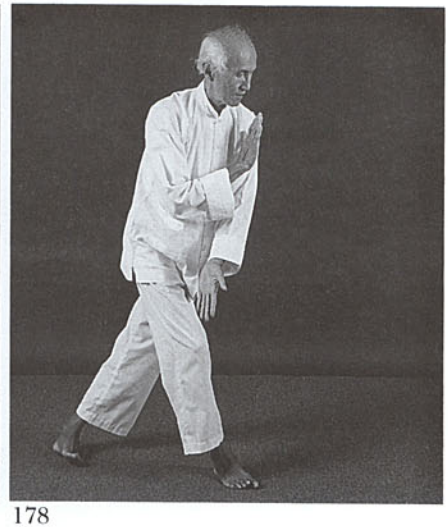


178

1) Turn to Left Front Corner

* By rotating hip joint, pivot right foot on ball until it points to Left Front Corner (Fig. 177)

Note: Pelvis and body will naturally turn to Left Front Corner

At the same time:

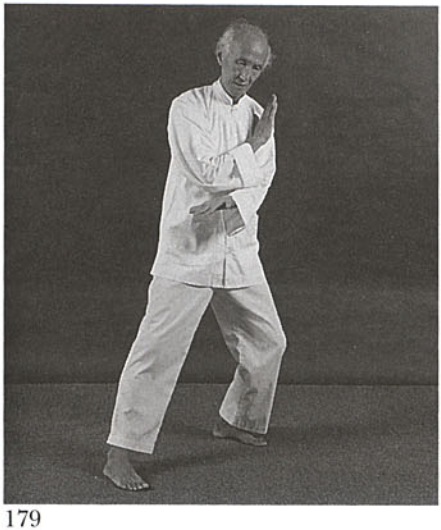
* Bend right wrist and bring right hand in front of left shoulder until palm faces Left Back Corner, with fingers pointing up
* Lower left hand to opposite side of body in a downward arc until palm faces Right Front Corner, about four inches away from right thigh and halfway between right knee and right elbow

At the same time:

* By rotating right hip joint, pivot left foot on heel until left toes point to Left Front Corner (Fig. 178)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean toward Left Back Corner, facing Left Front Corner in a slanting straight line with left leg
Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Front Corner
Legs are crossed
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Arms are crossed
Right arm is bent, with palm in front of left shoulder
Right palm is bent at wrist facing Left Back Corner
Left arm is straight and crosses body
Left wrist is at side of right thigh, about four inches away



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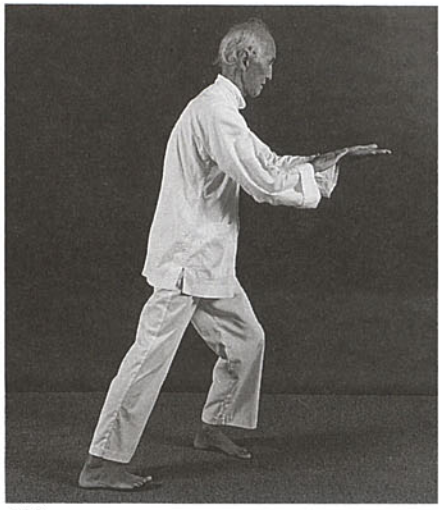


180

Left palm faces Right Front Corner
Left forearm should not touch body
Eyes look to Left Front Corner

2) Work at Left Back Corner

* Move left foot in a straight line toward Left Back Corner until left leg remains straight and left foot naturally touches the ground, parallel to right foot and slightly wider than hips' width apart

  Note: Feet are parallel, pointing to Left Front Corner and slightly wider than hips' width apart
  Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
  Arms remain in position

* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg and bending left knee (Fig. 179)

  Note: Pelvis and body still face Left Front Corner
  A slanting straight line extends from right heel, through leg and body, to top of head
  Left shoulder is above left knee and toes
  Arms remain in position

* By rotating left hip joint, pivot right foot on heel until right foot points to Left Back Corner (Fig. 180)
  At the same time:

* Move left hand upward and toward Left and Back until wrist is in front of shoulder and at shoulder level, with palm facing up and fingers pointing to Left Front Corner

* Bring right hand forward until middle finger touches inside of left wrist, with palm facing down

Note: Left foot stays in position
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left Back Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Left foot points to Left Front Corner
Right foot points to Left Back Corner
Left elbow is above left knee
Left palm extends straight from forearm, facing up; left hand is in front of left shoulder
Eyes watch left hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes

Note: Left toes will naturally lift up, pointing to Left Back Corner

At the same time:

* Turn left palm to face Left Back Corner
* Turn right palm to face Right Front Corner (Fig. 181)

While turning palms:
Middle finger of right hand still touches inside of left wrist
Left wrist is in front of neck
Left forearm and upper arm form a ninety-degree angle
Right palm extends straight from forearm, facing up

* Incline backward at pelvis as much as possible

Note: Waist remains straight

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes (Fig. 182)

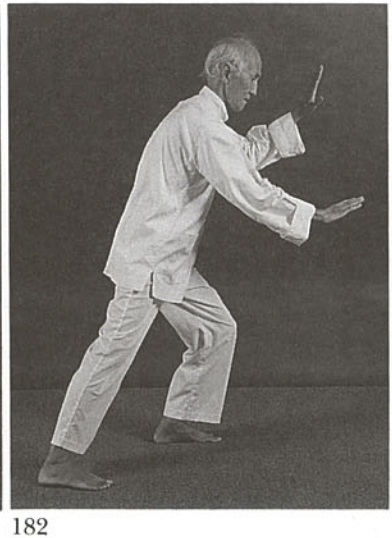
At the same time:

* By rotating shoulder joint and lowering elbow, bring left palm in front of shoulder, with palm still facing Left Back Corner and wrist still at shoulder level
* Lower right arm at shoulder joint until it is in front of left thigh, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left Back Corner

Note: Right wrist is halfway between left elbow and left knee

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step, facing Left Back Corner

181



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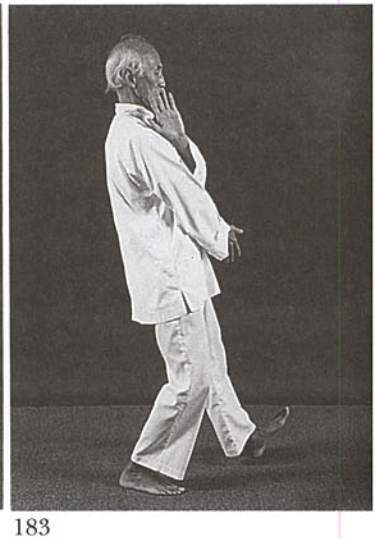


183

Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Left arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level
Left palm faces Left Back Corner; fingers pointing up
Right arm is bent, with forearm in front of right thigh, about four inches away
Right wrist is halfway between left elbow and left knee
Right palm faces the ground, with fingers pointing to Left Back Corner
Eyes look to Left Back Corner

Transition: Turn Around, Split Mane at Right Front Corner

1) Turn Around—turn around 180 degrees

* Incline backward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes (Fig. 183)

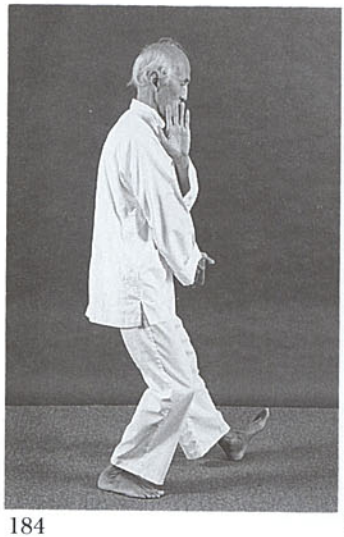
At the same time:

* Bend left wrist and bring left hand in front of right shoulder until left palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

Note: Hand and elbow do not touch shoulder

* Lower right hand to opposite side of body in a downward arc until palm faces Right Back Corner, about four inches away from left thigh and halfway between left knee and left elbow

Note: Right arm remains straight
Right forearm should not touch body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185

186

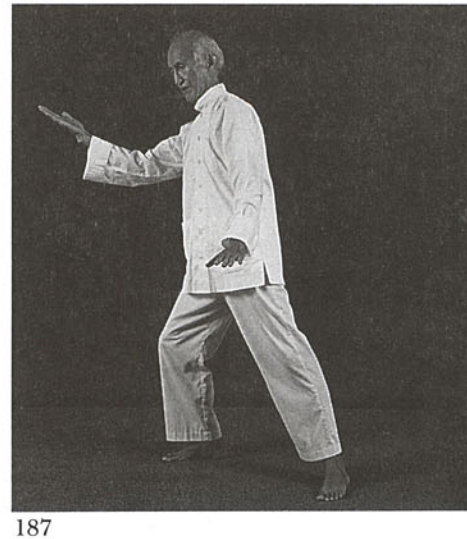
* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 184)
* By rotating right hip joint, pivot left foot on heel until left foot points to Left Front Corner (Fig. 185)

  Note: Right knee remains bent; left leg remains straight
  Arms remain in position
* Shift weight to left leg by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lifting right toes (Fig. 186)
* Let pelvis and body turn naturally to Right Front Corner

  (This movement is a delicate transition. After you are familiar with this movement, you can combine it with the previous movement)

  Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right Front Corner
  Feet point to Right Front Corner
  Left knee is bent; right leg is straight, with toes pointing up
* Move right foot slightly toward Right and Back until it is slightly wider than hips' width apart from left foot, with toes pointing to Left Front Corner

  Note: Keep weight on left foot
  Feet are parallel and slightly wider than hips' width apart
  Right foot points to Right Front Corner, with toes pointing up



187

2) Shift Weight and Split Arms (Fig. 187)

* Shift weight to right leg by straightening left leg and bending right knee

At the same time:

* Turn pelvis and body to face Right Front Corner by lifting left toes and rotating right hip joint; let left foot naturally follow pelvis and body as they pivot to Right Front Corner

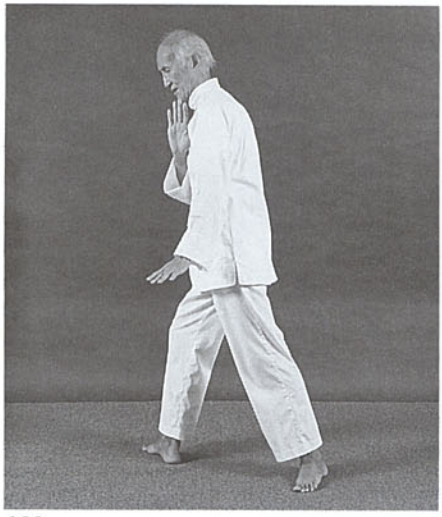
At the same time:

* Bring right hand diagonally upward and to right side of body in a straight line until hand is at ear level

Note: Right arm is slightly bent
Right palm stays in position and naturally slants at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up

* Bring left arm diagonally downward and to left side of body in a straight line until palm is at side of left thigh, about twelve inches away and halfway between left knee and right shoulder

Note: Pelvis and body incline to Right Back Corner, facing Right Front Corner
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Right foot points to Right Front Corner
Left foot points to Front



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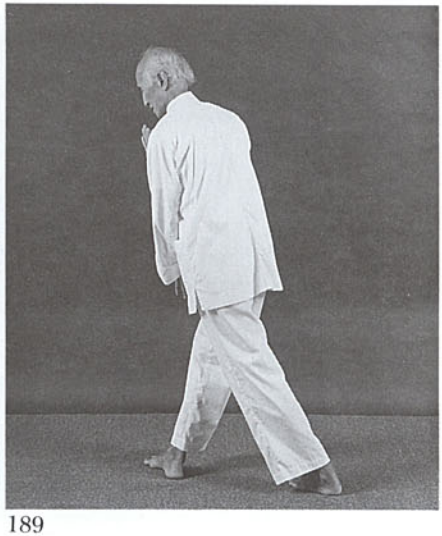


189

Work at Right Front Corner

The following movements are similar to Work at Left Back Corner, except that they are performed at Right Front Corner.

1) Turn to Right Back Corner

* By rotating right hip joint, pivot right foot on ball until it points to Right Back Corner

Note: Pelvis and body will naturally turn to Right Back Corner

At the same time:

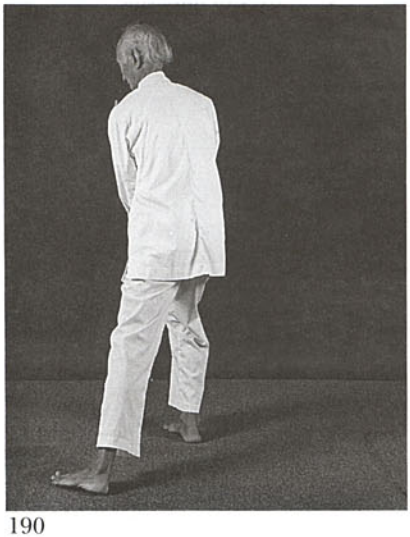
* Bend right wrist and bring right hand in front of left shoulder until palm faces Right Front Corner, with fingers pointing up (Fig. 188)
* Lower left hand to opposite side of body in a downward arc until palm faces Left Back Corner, about four inches away from right thigh and halfway between right knee and right elbow

At the same time:

* Pivot left foot on heel by rotating right hip joint until left toes point to Right Back Corner (Fig. 189)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean toward Right Front Corner, facing Right Back Corner in a slanting straight line with left leg
Feet are parallel, pointing to Right Back Corner
Legs are crossed
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight



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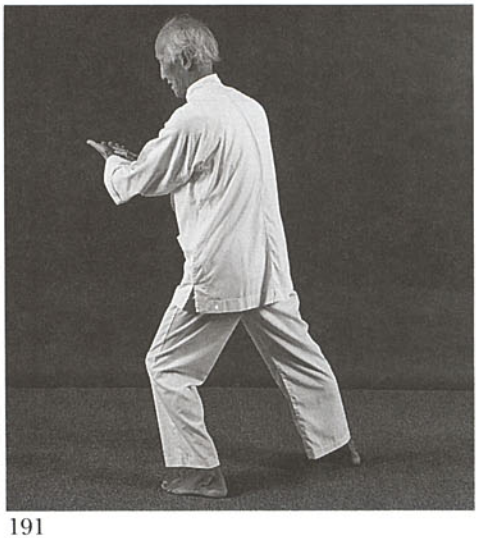


191

Arms are crossed
Right arm is bent, with palm in front of left shoulder
Right palm is bent at wrist, facing Right Front Corner
Left palm is straight, crossing body
Left wrist is at side of right thigh, about four inches away
Left palm faces Left Back Corner
Left forearm does not touch body
Eyes look to Right Back Corner

2) Work at Right Front Corner

* Move left foot in a straight line toward Right Front Corner until left leg remains straight and left foot naturally touches the ground, parallel to right foot and slightly wider than hips' width apart (Fig. 190)

  Note: Feet are parallel, pointing to Right Back Corner, slightly wider than hips' width apart
  Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
  Arms remain in position

* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg and bending left knee (Fig. 191)

  Note: Pelvis and body still face Right Back Corner
  A slanting straight line extends from right heel, through leg and body, to top of head
  Left shoulder is above left knee and toes
  Arms remain in position

* Pivot right foot on heel by rotating left hip joint until right foot points to Right Front Corner

At the same time:

* Move left hand upward and toward Right and Front until wrist is in front of chest and at shoulder level, with palm facing up
* Bring right hand forward until middle finger touches inside of left wrist, with palm facing down

Note: Left foot stays in position
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Right Front Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Left foot points to Right Back Corner
Right Foot points to Right Front Corner
Left elbow is above left knee
Left palm extends straight from forearm, facing up
Left hand is in front of left shoulder
Eyes watch left hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously,

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes

Note: Left toes will naturally lift up, pointing to Right Front Corner

At the same time:

* Turn left palm to face Right Front Corner
* Turn right palm to face Left Back Corner (Fig. 192)

While turning palms:
Middle finger of right hand still touches inside of left wrist
Left wrist is in front of neck
Left forearm and upper arm form a ninety-degree angle
Left palm extends straight from forearm, facing up

* Incline backward at pelvis as much as you can

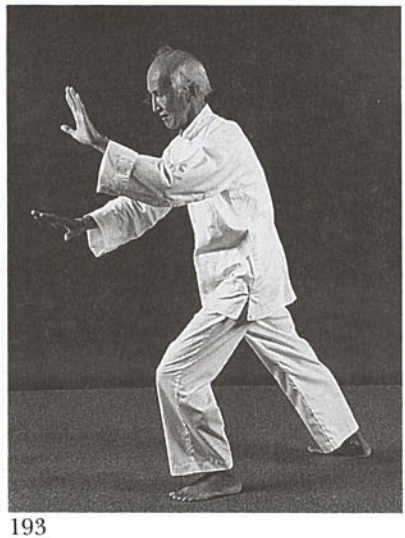
Note: Waist stays straight

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes (Fig. 193)

At the same time:

* By rotating shoulder joint and lowering elbow, bring left palm in front of shoulder, with palm still facing Right Front Corner and wrist still at shoulder level
* Lower right arm at shoulder joint until it is in front of and at side of left thigh, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Right Front Corner

192



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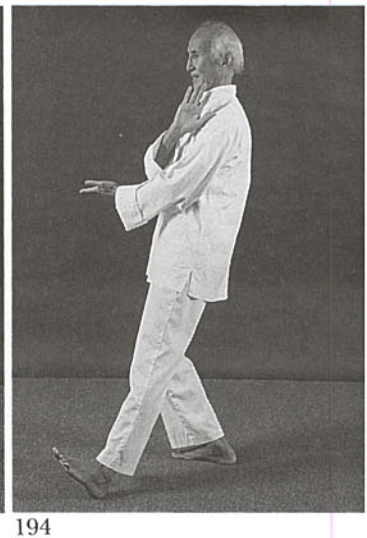


194

Note: Right wrist is halfway between left elbow and left knee

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step, facing Right Front Corner

Left knee is bent; right leg is straight

Left arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level

Left palm faces Right Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

Right arm is bent, with forearm at side of right thigh, about four inches away

Right wrist is halfway between left elbow and left knee

Right palm faces the ground, with fingers pointing to Right Front Corner

Eyes look to Right Front Corner

Transition: Split Mane at Right Back Corner

The following movements are similar to Split Mane at Left Back Corner, except left limbs and right limbs, Left Back Corner and Right Back Corner are switched.

1) Turn to Right Back Corner (Fig. 194)

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes

At the same time:

* Bend right wrist and bring right hand in front of left shoulder until palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

  Note: Left toes point up, facing Right Front Corner
  Hand and elbow do not touch body
  Right palm faces Left Front Corner
  Fingers point up

* Lower left hand to opposite side of body in a downward arc until palm faces Right Back Corner, about four inches away from left thigh and halfway between left knee and left elbow
* Pivot left foot on heel by rotating right hip joint until toes point to Right Front Corner (Fig. 195)

  Note: Pelvis and body will naturally become upright, facing Right Front Corner
  Right leg stays bent, with foot pointing to Right Back Corner
  Left leg stays straight, with foot pointing to Right Front Corner
  Arms stay in position
  Right palm faces Left Front Corner, following body
  Left palm faces Right Back Corner, following body
  Right wrist is in front of left shoulder
  Left wrist is at side of right thigh, about four inches away
  Left arm remains straight
  Left forearm should not touch body

2) Shift Weight and Split Arms (Fig. 196)

* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg and bending left knee

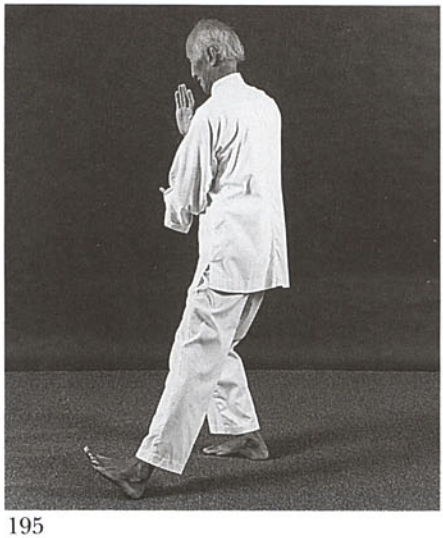
  Note: Right foot stays in position

  At the same time:

* Bring left arm diagonally upward and to left side of body in a straight line until hand is at ear level

  Note: Left arm is slightly bent
  Left palm stays in position, naturally slanting at a forty-five-degree angle and facing up

* Bring right arm diagonally downward and to right side of body in a straight line until palm is at side of right



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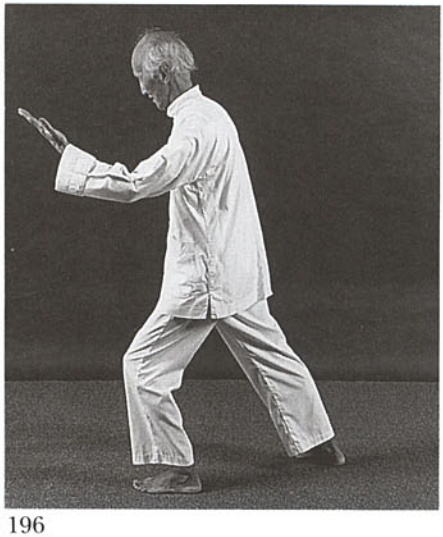


196

thigh, about twelve inches away and halfway between right knee and right shoulder

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body face Right Back Corner in a slanting straight line with right leg

Left foot points to Right

Right foot points to Right Back Corner

Left knee is bent; right leg is straight

Left arm is slightly bent, with palm at ear level

Left hand is straight, as an extension of forearm

Left palm slants at a forty-five-degree angle, facing up

Right arm is slightly bent, with palm facing down and fingers pointing up

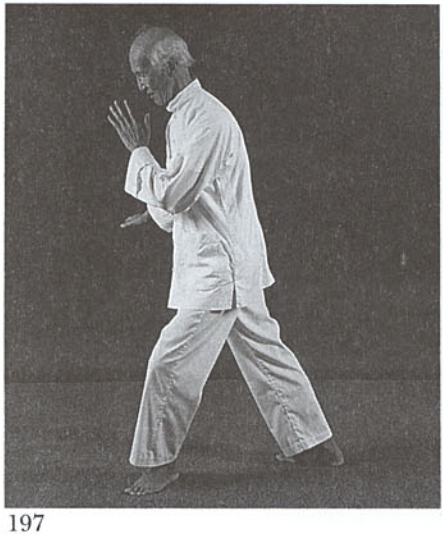
Right palm is halfway between right knee and right shoulder

Right hand is about twelve inches away from thigh

Eyes watch right hand without bending neck

Work at Right Back Corner

The following movements are similar to Work at Left Front Corner, except that they are performed at Right Back Corner.



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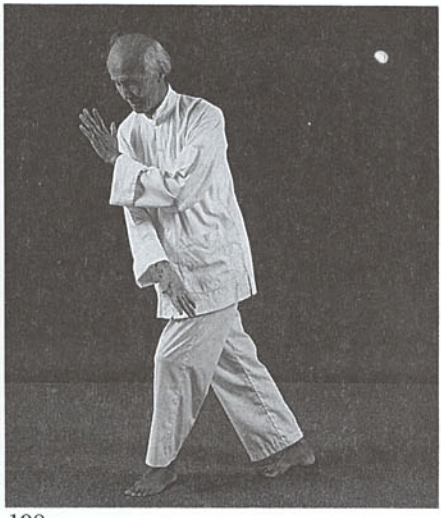


198

1) Turn to Right Front Corner

* By rotating left hip joint, pivot left foot on ball until it points to Right Front Corner

Note: Pelvis and body will naturally turn to Right Front Corner

At the same time:

* Bend left wrist and bring left hand in front of right shoulder until palm faces Right Back Corner, with fingers pointing up (Fig. 197)
* Lower right hand to opposite side of body in a downward arc until palm faces Left Front Corner, about four inches away from left thigh and halfway between left knee and left elbow

At the same time:

* By rotating left hip joint, pivot right foot on heel until right toes point to Right Front Corner (Fig. 198)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean toward Right Back Corner, facing Right Front Corner in a slanting straight line with right leg

Feet are parallel, pointing to Right Front Corner

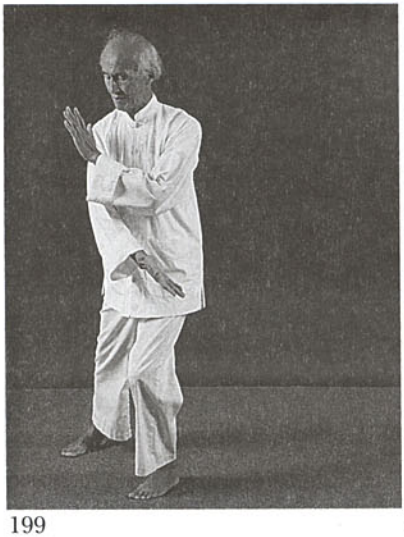
Legs are crossed

Left knee is bent, right leg is straight

Arms are crossed

Left arm is bent, with palm in front of right shoulder

Left palm is bent at wrist, facing Right Back Corner



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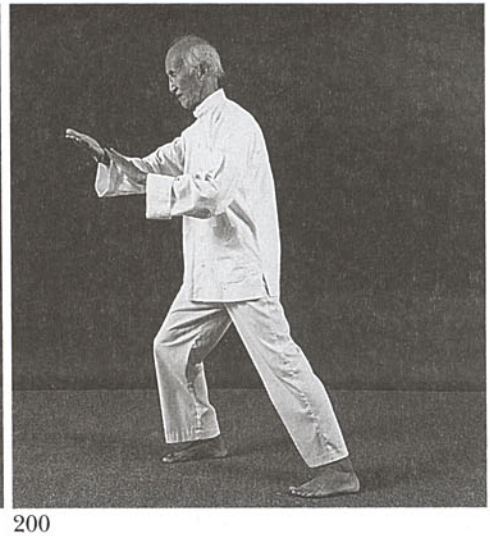


200

Right arm is straight and crosses body
Right wrist is at side of left thigh, about four inches away
Right palm faces Left Front Corner
Right forearm should not touch body
Eyes look to Right Front Corner

2) Work at Right Back Corner

* Move right foot in a straight line toward Right Back Corner until right leg remains straight and right foot naturally touches the ground, parallel to left foot and slightly wider than hips' width apart (Fig. 199)

  Note: Feet are parallel, point to Right Front Corner, and are slightly wider than hips' width apart
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  Arms remain in position

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee (Fig. 200)

  Note: Pelvis and body face Right
  A slanting straight line extends from left heel, through leg and body, to top of head
  Right shoulder is above right knee and toes
  Arms remain in position

* By rotating right hip joint, pivot left foot on heel until left foot points to Right Back Corner

  Note: Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
  Pelvis and body turn naturally to face Right Front Corner

At the same time:

* Move right hand upward and toward Right and Back until wrist is at shoulder level, with palm facing up and fingers pointing to Right Front Corner
* Bring left hand forward until middle finger touches inside of right wrist, with palm facing down

Note: Right foot stays in position
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Right Back Corner
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Right foot points to Right Front Corner
Left Foot points to Right Back Corner
Right elbow is above right knee
Right palm extends straight from forearm, facing up
Right hand is in front of chest
Eyes watch right hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Lean pelvis and body backward by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lifting right toes (Fig. 201)

Note: Right toes will naturally lift up, pointing to Right Back Corner

At the same time:

* Turn right palm to face Right Back Corner
* Turn left palm to face Left Front Corner

While turning palms:
Right wrist is in front of neck
Right forearm and upper arm form a ninety-degree angle
Left palm extends straight from forearm

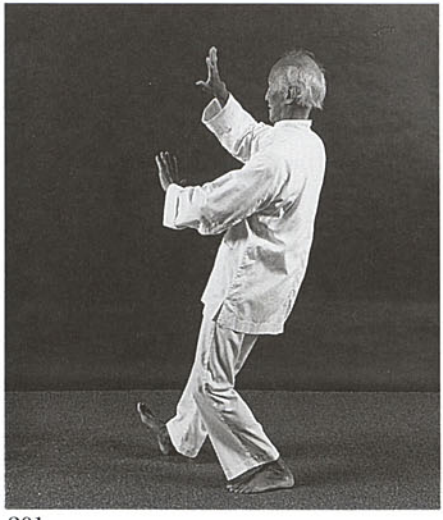
* Incline backward at pelvis as much as you can

Note: Waist stays straight

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening left leg, lowering right toes, and bending right leg (Fig. 202)

At the same time:

* Bring right palm in front of shoulder by rotating shoulder joint and lowering elbow, with palm still facing Right Back Corner, wrist still at shoulder level, and fingers pointing up



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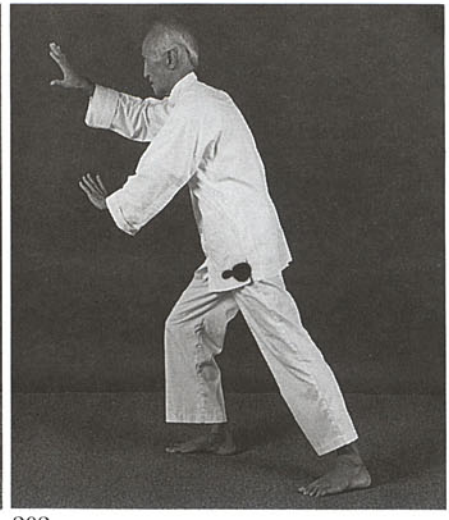


202

* Lower left arm at shoulder joint until it is in front of and at side of left thigh, with palm facing the ground, extending straight from forearm, and fingers pointing to Right Back Corner

  Note: Left wrist is halfway between right elbow and right knee

  When the above is completed:

  Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step, facing Right Back Corner

  Right knee is bent; left leg is straight

  Right arm is bent, with wrist in front of shoulder at shoulder level

  Right palm faces Right Back Corner, with fingers pointing up

  Left arm is bent, with hand in front of and at side of left thigh, about twelve inches away

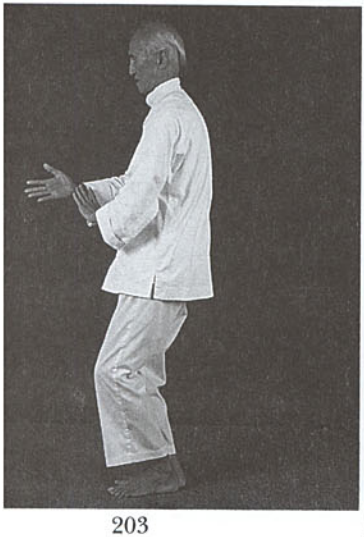
  Left wrist is halfway between left elbow and left knee

  Left palm faces the ground, with fingers pointing to Right Back Corner

  Eyes look to Right Back Corner

Single Whip

Single Whip serves as a transition between Section Two and Section Three of the Condensed Form of Wu-Style Tai-chi.



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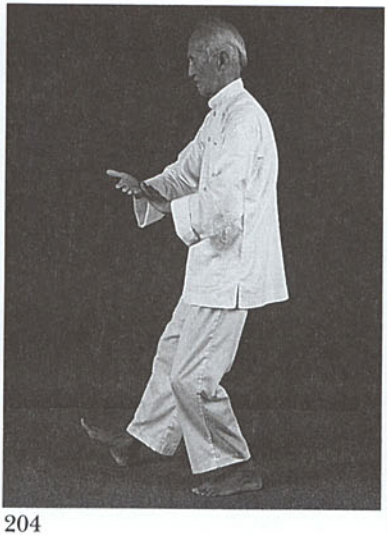

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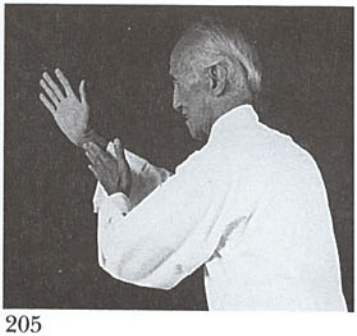


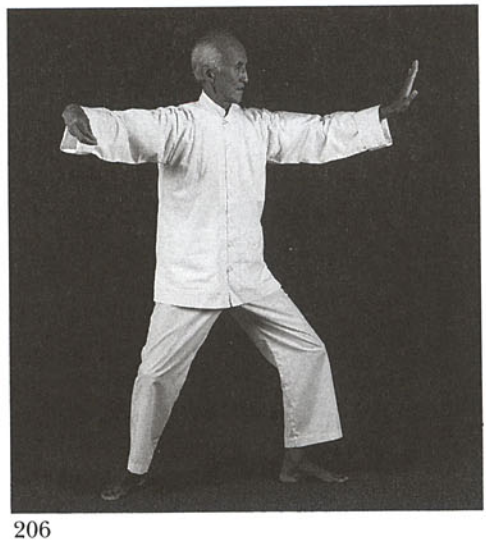
205

Transition: Turn to Right

* Bring pelvis and body upright by moving left foot forward until even with right foot (Fig. 203)
  Note: Left foot is flat on the ground.
* Immediately shift weight to left foot by lifting right toes, with heel touching the ground (Fig. 204)
  At the same time:
* Turn right palm to face Front and draw right wrist toward body until it is in front of chest, about ten inches away, with forearm parallel to the ground and fingers pointing to Right Front Corner
* Raise left hand until middle finger touches inside of right wrist, with palm facing Right Back Corner (Fig. 205)
* Gradually slide right foot forward until knee straightens and heel touches the ground
  Note: Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart

When the above is completed:

Perform one repetition of Single Whip (Transition) as on pages 156–157



206

Section Three

POSTURE 26 : *Move Downward*

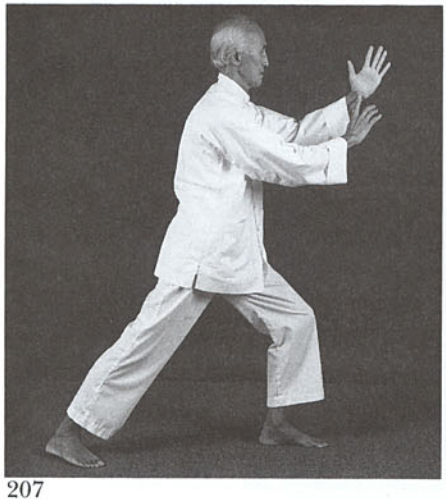
Turn to Left

* Pivot left foot on heel until it points to Left by rotating right hip joint; let arms stay in position and follow body as it turns (Fig. 206)

  Note: Pelvis and body will naturally face Left Front Corner
  Legs remain bent
  Weight stays on both feet
  Left palm faces Left, with wrist at shoulder level and fingers pointing up
  Wrist of right hand points to Front

* Pivot right foot on ball until it points to Left by rotating left hip joint

  Note: Pelvis and body will naturally face to Left and stay upright
  Left leg remains bent, right leg becomes straight, with heel touching the ground
  Weight naturally shifts to left foot



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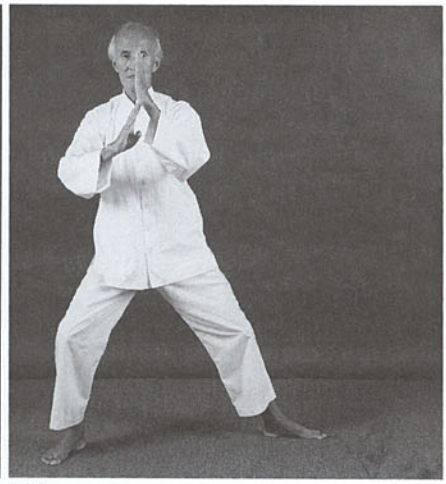


208

At the same time:

* Turn left palm toward Front
* Open fingers of right hand and move right hand toward left hand until middle finger of right hand touches inside of left wrist (Fig. 207)

Note: Left hand remains straight, as an extension of forearm

Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left

Left knee is bent, right leg is straight

Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level and palm facing Front, fingers pointing up

Right arm is bent, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist

Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped

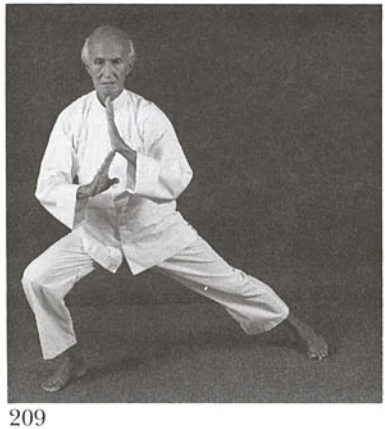
Eyes watch left hand

Turn to Front—Move down

* Turn pelvis, body, and right foot to Front by rotating right hip joint and pivoting right foot on heel; let hands remain in position and follow turning pelvis and body until they are about eight inches away (Fig. 208)

Note: Left palm faces Right, with fingers pointing up and wrist at shoulder level

Right hand remains in position, with middle finger touching inside of left wrist



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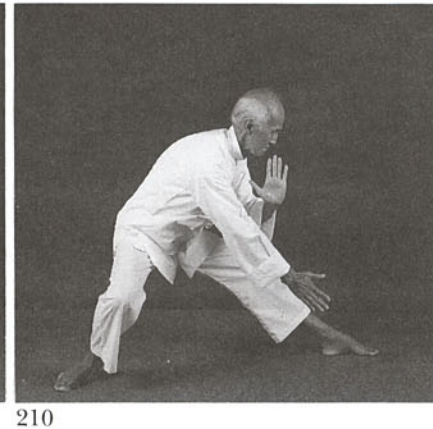


210

At the same time:

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee
* Sink pelvis and body down vertically by dropping tailbone and pivoting left foot on ball until toes point to Front (Fig. 209)

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Front
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes watch left hand, without bending neck

Turn to Left Front Corner—drop hands downward

* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint and pivoting left foot on heel until toes point to Left

At the same time:

* Drop right hand downward by straightening elbow until it points to Left and is parallel to left leg (Fig. 210)

Note: Left hand stays in position in front of chest
Right arm should not touch body

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left Front Corner
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Right foot points to Front
Left foot points to Left
Right arm is straight, parallel to left leg
Right palm faces Back, with fingers pointing downward and toward Left
Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level, palm facing Front, and fingers pointing up
Eyes watch left hand without bending neck

POSTURE 27 : *Rooster Stands on One Leg*

Stand on Left Leg

* Shift weight to left leg by straightening right leg and bending left knee (Fig. 211)

  At the same time:

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward and bringing right foot forward until it is even with left foot
* Raise right foot in front of body; bend right ankle and let toes point up, with thigh parallel to the ground

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright

  At the same time:

* Bring right hand up until wrist is at shoulder level, with palm facing Back
* Bring left hand down until it is at side of body, with palm facing the ground and fingers pointing to Left (Fig. 212)

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
  Left elbow and wrist are bent slightly
  Eyes watch right hand

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

Stand on Right Leg

* Lower right leg until heel touches the ground, about hips' width away from left leg (Fig. 213)

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
  Right heel is in line with left toes

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee

  At the same time:

* Raise left foot by rotating hip joint, extending knee, and pointing toes to Left

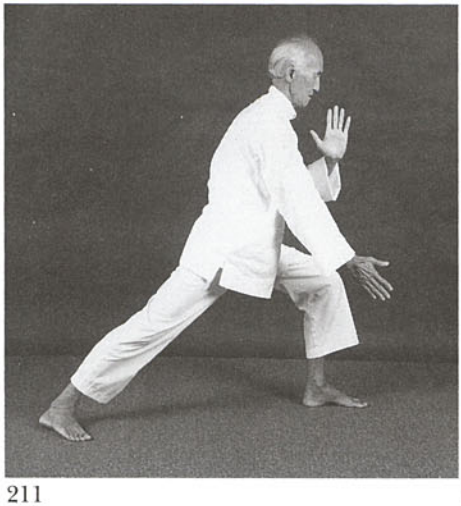
  Note: Toes, ankle, and leg are in a slanting straight line

* Lower right hand until forearm is parallel to the ground, with palm facing up

  Note: Upper arm drops vertically to side of body, but does not touch it

* Raise left hand until forearm is parallel to the ground, with palm facing up (Fig. 214)

  Note: Upper arm forms a forty-five-degree angle with body



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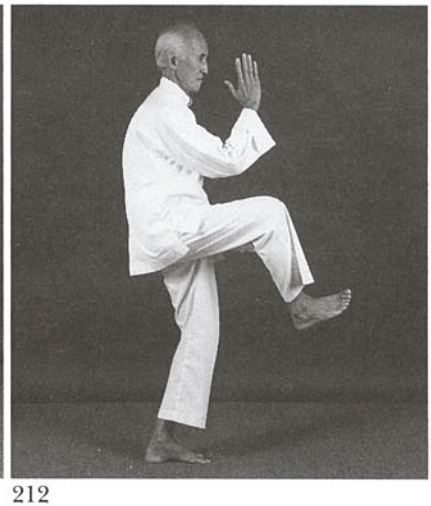

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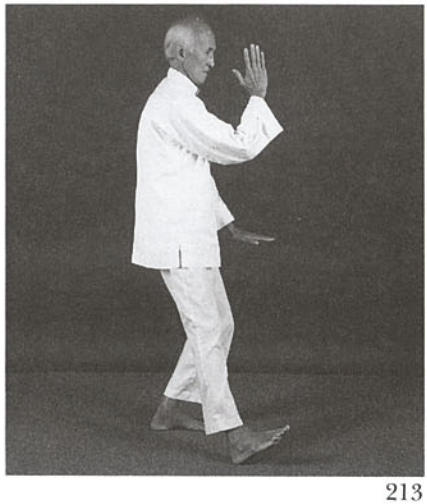

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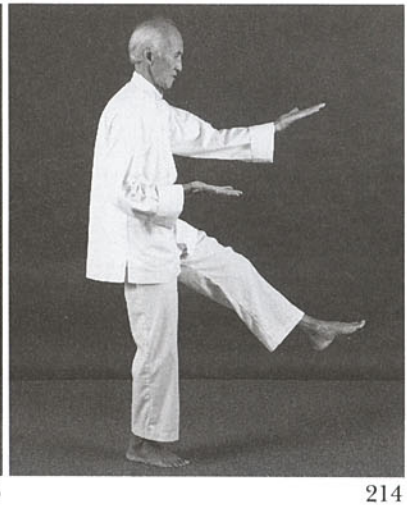
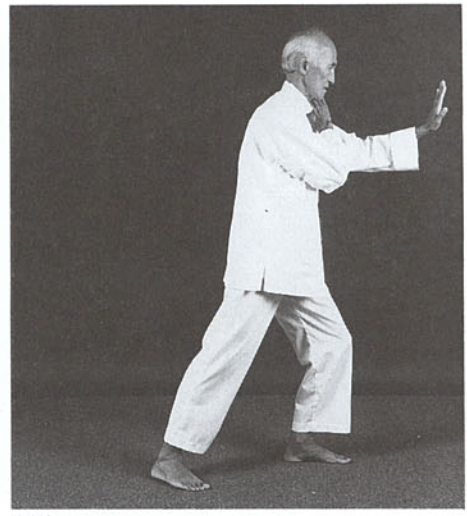


214

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Right knee is slightly bent
Left leg is straight and raised
Right upper arm drops vertically on side of body
Left upper arm forms a forty-five-degree angle with body
Forearms are parallel to the ground
Left forearm is higher than right forearm
Palms face up
Fingers point to Left
Eyes look to Left



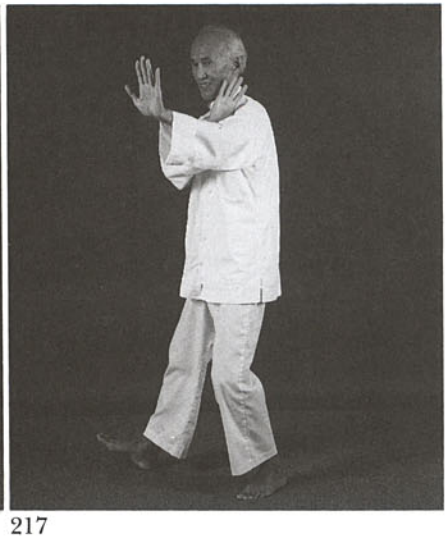
215

POSTURE 28 : *Hit Face with Palm*

* Lower left leg until heel touches the ground, about hips' width apart from right foot
  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
  Left heel is in line with right toes
* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes
  Note: Pelvis and body lean forward in a Bow-and-Arrow step

  At the same time:
* Bring right hand in front of left shoulder, with palm facing Right Back Corner
  Note: Elbow stays in position
  Hand and elbow do not touch body
* Rotate left palm until palm faces Left with fingers pointing up, using momentum of shifting weight as if hitting opponent's face (Fig. 215)
  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Left in a Bow-and-Arrow step
  Left knee is bent; right leg is straight
  A slanting straight line extends from right foot, through leg and body, to top of head
  Right hand is in front of left shoulder, with palm facing Right Back Corner and fingers pointing up

216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Left hand is in front of left shoulder, with wrist at shoulder level
Left palm faces Left, with fingers pointing up
Left forearm and upper arm form a ninety-degree angle
Eyes watch left hand

POSTURE 29 : *Turn Around Cross Hands, Sweep Lotus*

Turn to Front (Fig. 216)

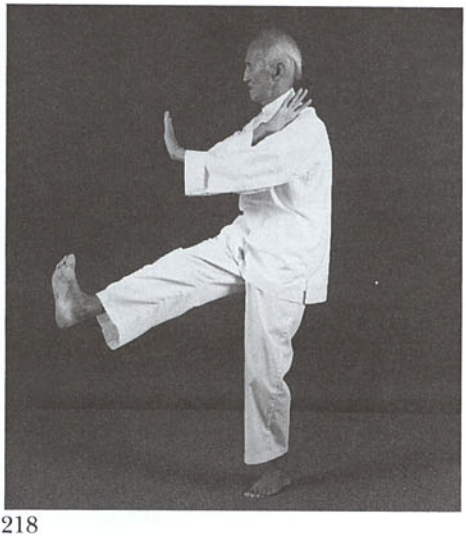
* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward
* Pivot left foot on heel so it points to Right Front Corner; let pelvis and body naturally turn to Front

Note: Feet stay in position
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Arms remain in position and follow body naturally as it turns
Eyes watch left hand

Turn to Right Front Corner (Fig. 217)

* Lift right toes and rotate left hip joint, letting pelvis and body turn naturally to Right Front Corner

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
Left knee is bent, staying in position



218

Right leg is straight and crosses body, with heel touching the ground and toes pointing to Right Front Corner

At the same time:

* Move left hand in front of right shoulder, with wrist at shoulder level, palm facing Right Back Corner, and fingers pointing up

Note: Right hand stays in position
Forearms are crossed
Left palm is in front of right shoulder, facing Right Back Corner with fingers pointing up
Right palm is in front of left shoulder, facing Left Front Corner with fingers pointing up
Eyes look to Right

Cross Hands Sweep Lotus

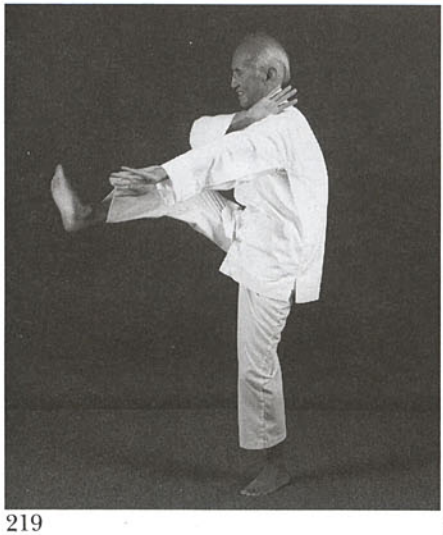
* Raise right leg at hip joint until it is parallel to the ground or lower, facing Right Front Corner with toes pointing up (Fig. 218)

Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
Arms remain in position

* Move right foot horizontally toward Right Back Corner at hip joint

At the same time:

* Lower left hand to Right Front Corner in a slightly



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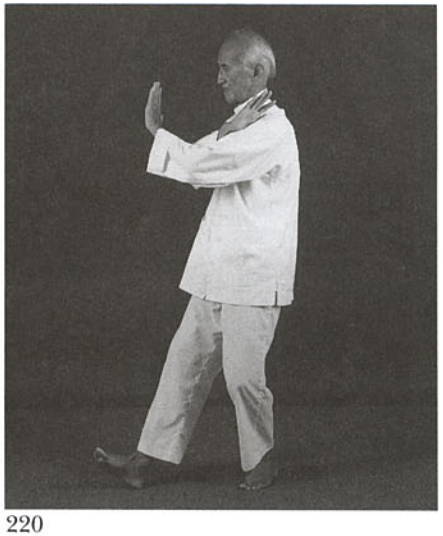


220

downward arc; strike top of right foot with palm as it crosses in front of pelvis (Fig. 219)

After doing this:

* Lower right foot until heel touches the ground

Note: Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart with toes pointing to Right

At the same time:

* Raise left hand slightly toward Front in an upward arc until wrist is at shoulder level, with palm facing Right Front Corner and fingers pointing up (Fig. 220)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right

Left foot points to Right Front Corner

Right foot points to Right, with toes up

Right heel is in line with left toes, about hips' width apart

Left arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level

Left palm faces Right Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

Right palm is in front of left shoulder

Right palm faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up

When left hand is moving in a downward and upward arc, it moves in one continuous motion.

POSTURE 30 : *Step Forward, Punch at Groin*

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lowering right toes (Fig. 221)
  Note: Left leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line, leaning forward
* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward
* Turn pelvis and body to the Right Back Corner by rotating right hip joint and lifting left heel
  Note: Left leg remains straight, with toes touching the ground
* Move left foot forward until heel touches the ground and is in line with right toes, about hips' width apart (Fig. 222)
  Note: Left leg is straight, with toes pointing up and facing Right

At the same time:

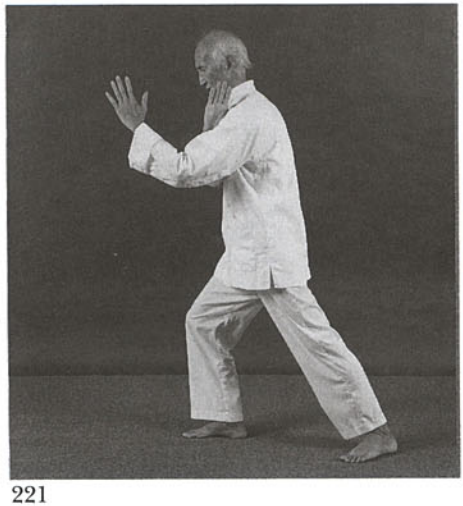
* Form a fist with right hand and bring right fist toward Back until wrist is in front of chest and at shoulder level, with palm facing Front
* Move left hand toward Back until middle finger touches inside of right wrist
  Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Right Back Corner
  Feet point to Right
  Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
  Left toes point up

First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.

* Shift weight to left foot by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lowering left toes

At the same time:

* Punch downward until right fist is about twelve inches from groin by using the momentum of shifting weight, as if punching opponent's groin
  Note: Right leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line, leaning forward
  Thumb is underneath fingers
* Move left palm downward and to Front at shoulder joint until it is in front of and at side of left leg, with palm facing down and fingers pointing to Right Back Corner (Fig. 223)



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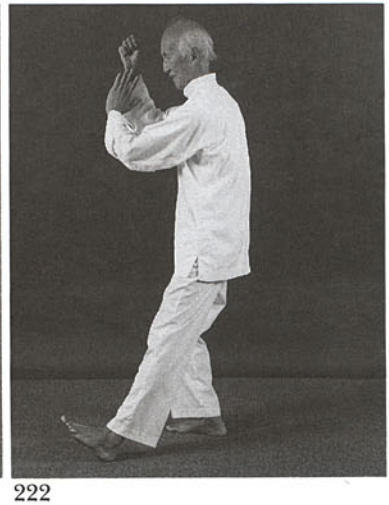

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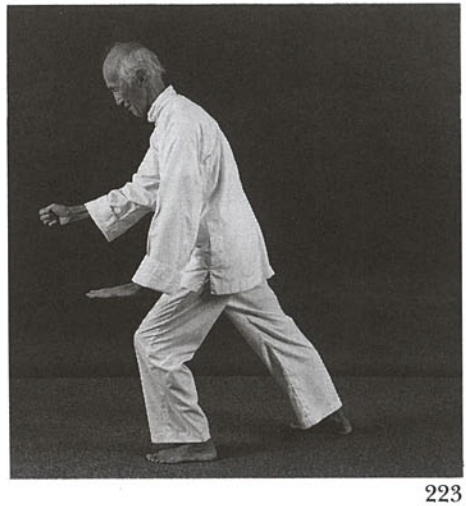

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When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body lean forward, facing Right in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Feet point to Right
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
Right arm is bent slightly, with fist in front of body about twelve inches from groin
Left arm is straight, with palm at side of left leg, facing the ground
Fingers point to Right Back Corner
Fingers of left hand are above knee and toes
Eyes watch right fist, without bending neck

POSTURE 31 : *Turn Around Seven Stars*

* Incline pelvis and body backward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes

At the same time:

* Bring left hand toward body until thumb lightly touches the lowest rib on the right side, with palm facing down

Note: Forearm is parallel to the ground, but does not touch body

* Bring right fist toward body until right forearm rests on left forearm, with fingers of fist touching inside of left elbow (Fig. 224)

Note: Left leg, body, and head are in a slanting straight line, inclining backward
Arms overlap
Left forearm is under right forearm
Hands are tucked behind elbows

* Bring pelvis and body upright by bending hip joints (Fig. 225)

Note: Arms and fist stay in position

* Turn pelvis and body to Back by rotating right hip joint and pivoting on left heel until left toes point to Left Back Corner (Fig. 226)

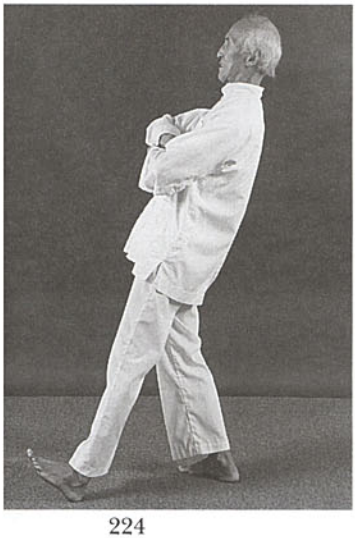
Note: Right knee remains bent; left leg remains straight

* Turn pelvis and body to face Left Back Corner by straightening right leg, bending left knee, and lifting right toes (Fig. 227)

Note: Pelvis, body, and right toes will naturally turn to Left Back Corner
Left knee is bent, right leg is straight, with toes pointing up

Immediately:

* Move right heel to Front, in front of body and about hips' width away from left heel, with right heel in line with left toes
* Drop both elbows inward, with upper arms staying in position; let left palm and right fist cross each other by letting little finger side of left wrist touch thumb side of right wrist in front of upper chest, about six inches away (Fig. 228)



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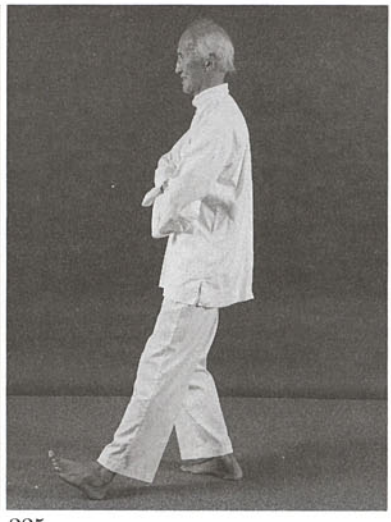

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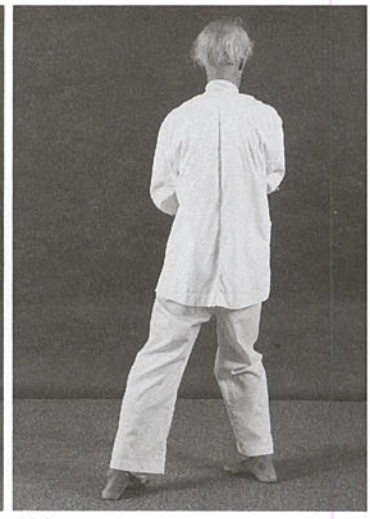

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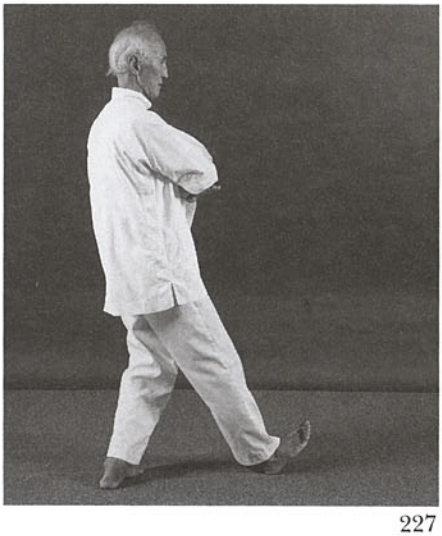

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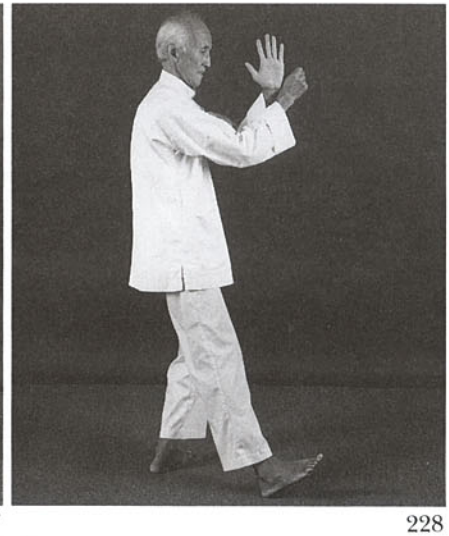

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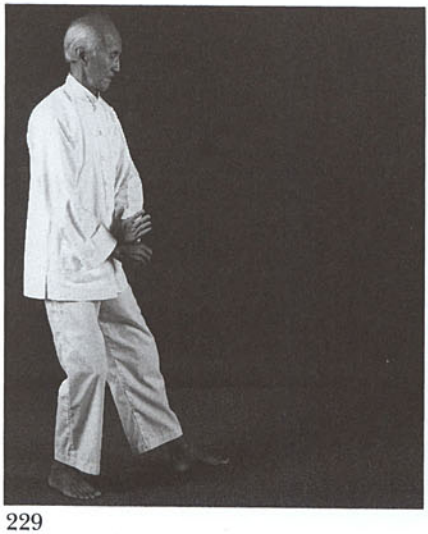
When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
Left leg is bent, with foot pointing to Left Back Corner
Right leg is straight with toes up, pointing to Left
Right fist and left palm cross each other at wrists
Wrists are at shoulder level
Left palm faces Front, with fingers pointing up
Knuckles of right fist face Back
Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Eyes look to Left



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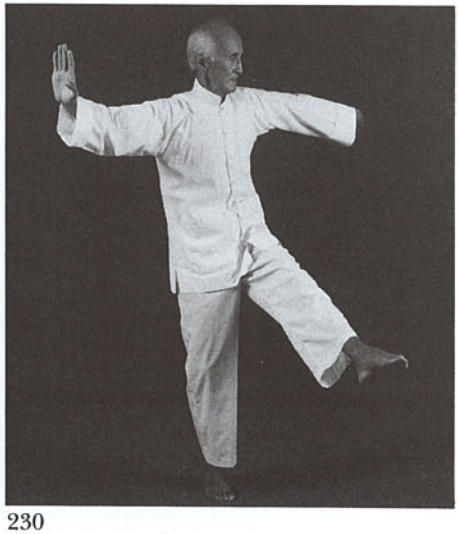

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POSTURE 32 : *Step Backward and Ride Tiger*

* Step backward with right foot until it is flat on the ground behind left foot, about hips' width apart with right toes in line with left heel

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight

* Shift weight to right leg by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lifting left toes slightly

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright

  At the same time:

* Lower crossed hands until hands are in front of navel, but do not touch it (Fig. 229)

* Raise left foot until leg is straight, with toes down, pointing to Left Front Corner

  At the same time:

* Open right fist and raise palm in an outward arc until wrist is in front of shoulder, at shoulder level with palm facing Right Front Corner

  Note: Right upper arm and forearm will naturally form a 120-degree angle

* Bring left fingers together

* Bend left wrist and raise left hand behind body until hand points to Right Back Corner (Fig. 230)
  Note: Left arm is bent slightly
* Eyes watch Left Front Corner
  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.
  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left
  Right knee is bent, with foot pointing to Front
  Left leg is straight and raised, with toes pointing to Left Front Corner
  Right arm is bent, with wrist at shoulder level
  Right palm is in front of shoulder, facing Right Front Corner
  Left arm is bent with fingers hooked, pointing to Right Back Corner about twelve inches away
  Eyes watch Left Back Corner

POSTURE 33 : *Turn Around, Hit Face with Both Palms*

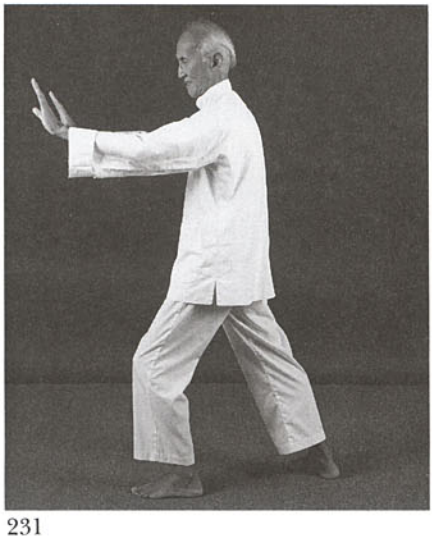
* Turn pelvis and body 180 degrees to Right by rotating right hip joint and pivoting right foot on ball, with left foot remaining in position as it follows the turning of pelvis and body
  Note: Pelvis, body, and feet face Right
  After turning around:
* Immediately lower left foot and let it naturally fall flat on the ground, pointing to Right
  Note: Left heel is naturally in line with right toes, about hips' width apart
  At the same time:
* Let right arm and hand stay in position and follow pelvis and body as they turn to Right, with wrist at shoulder level and fingers pointing up
* Rotate left hooked hand in a forward arc, open the fingers of the hook, and bring the palm up until it faces Right, with wrist at shoulder level, and fingers pointing up

* By using the momentum of shifting weight as if hitting opponent's face, incline pelvis and body forward slightly with wrists at shoulder level, palms facing Right, and fingers pointing up (Fig. 231)
  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.
  When the above is completed:
  Pelvis and body lean forward slightly, facing Right in a Bow and Arrow step
  Left knee is bent, right leg is straight
  Feet point to Right
  Arms are slightly bent
  Wrists are at shoulder level, shoulders' width apart
  Palms face Right, with fingers pointing up
  Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
  Eyes look to Right

POSTURE 34 : *Turn Feet, Sweep Lotus*

Turn Feet

* Bring pelvis and body upright by pushing pelvis forward
  Note: Arms and hands stay in position
* Turn pelvis and body to Back by rotating right hip joint and pivoting on left heel until left toes point to Left Back Corner (Fig. 232)
  Note: Left knee remains bent; right leg remains straight
  Right foot points to Back
  Left foot points to Left Back Corner
  Arms and hands remain in position
* Turn pelvis and body to Left Back Corner by rotating left hip joint, lifting right toes, and letting right foot naturally follow pelvis and body as they pivot to Left Back Corner (Fig. 233)
  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Left Back Corner
  Feet point to Left Back Corner
  Left knee is bent
  Right leg is straight, with toes pointing up
  Arms stay in position and follow pelvis and body as they turn to Left Back Corner



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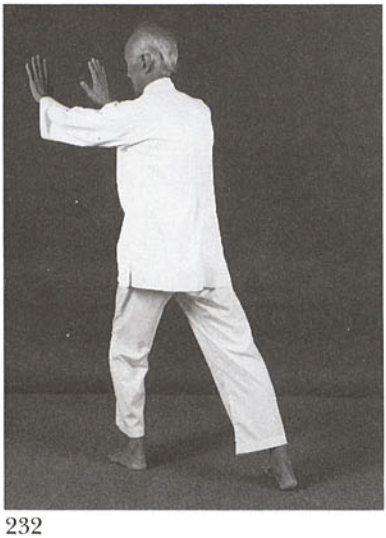

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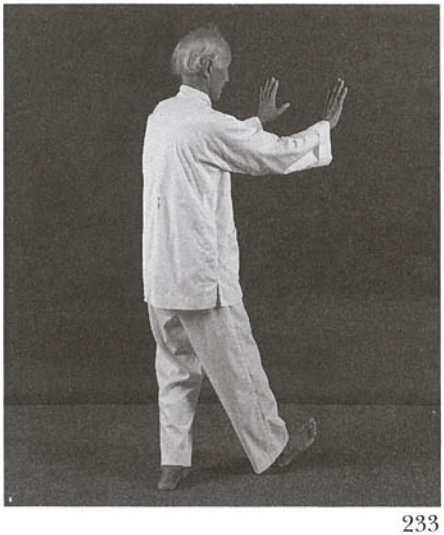

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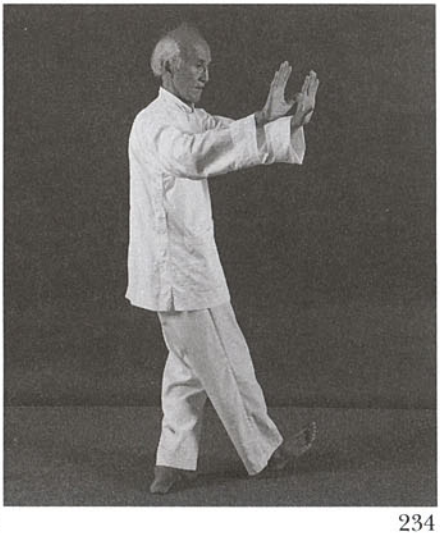


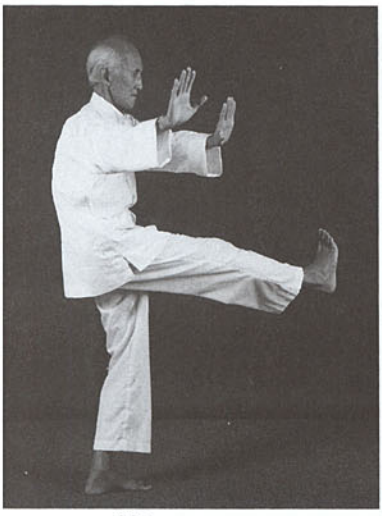
234

Sweep Lotus

* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by rotating left hip joint (Fig. 234)

  Note: Pelvis and body remain upright
  Feet stay in position
  Arms remain in position and follow body as it turns to Left Front Corner
  Eyes follow body, looking at Left Front Corner

* Raise right leg with toes up, still pointing to Left Back Corner



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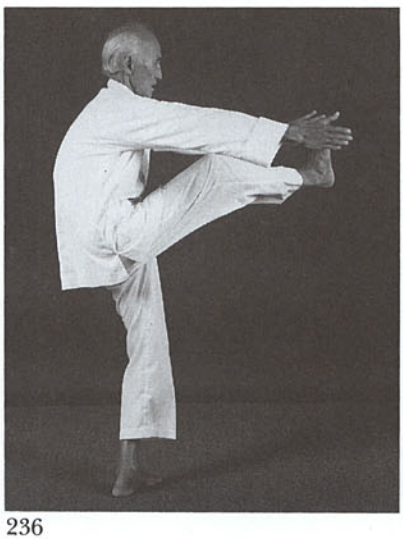

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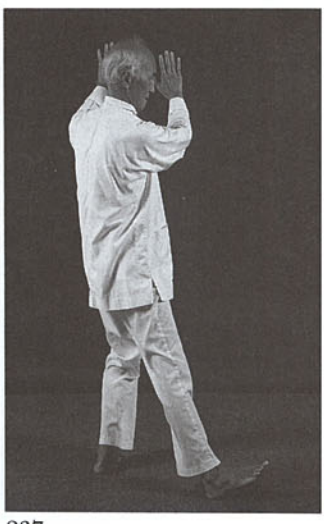

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* Bring right leg to Left Front Corner in a horizontal arc by rotating right hip joint (Fig. 235)

At the same time:

* Bring both hands down slightly in an arc toward Back, striking top of right foot in front of pelvis as if sweeping lotus with right leg (Fig. 236)

After doing this:

* Immediately lower right leg until heel naturally touches the ground in front of body, about hips' width apart from left heel, with toes pointing to Left

At the same time:

* Bring both hands up and toward Back until palms face Back with forearms parallel to each other and wrists at shoulder level (Fig. 237)

Note: Pelvis and body are upright, facing Left; left wrist is in front of side of left shoulder

Right wrist is shoulders' width apart from left wrist

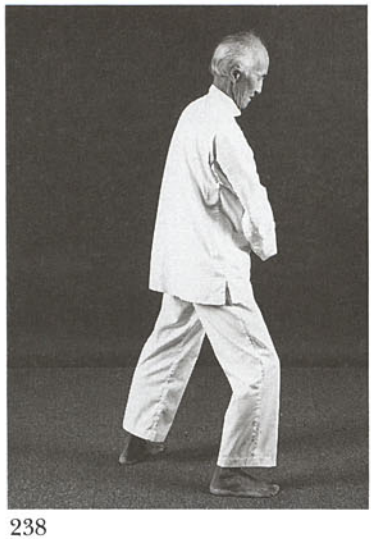
Forearms are parallel to each other and shoulders' width apart

Palms face Back, with fingers pointing up

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Left Back Corner

Left knee remains bent



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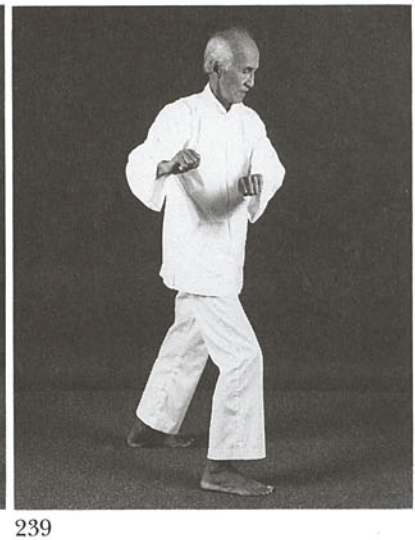


239

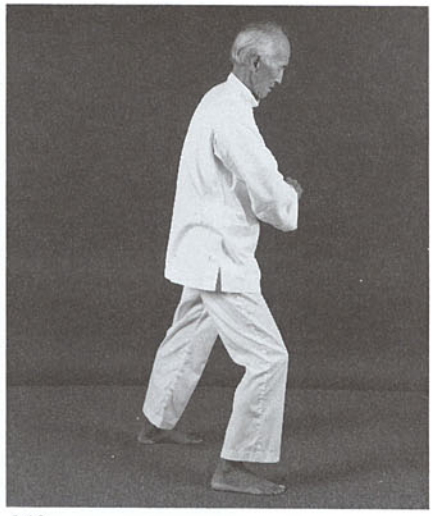
Left foot still points to Left Back Corner
Right leg stays straight, with toes up, pointing to Left
Right heel is in front of body, about hips' width apart from left heel
Arms are bent, with wrists at shoulder level, shoulders' width apart
Palms face Back with fingers up
Eyes look to Left Back Corner

POSTURE 35 : *Bend Bow to Shoot Tiger*

* Lean pelvis and body forward by straightening left leg, bending right knee, and lowering right toes; let left foot follow body, pivoting to Left on heel (Fig. 238)
  Note: Both feet point to Left
* Make fists with both hands and bring both fists down until fists are in front of body and forearms are parallel to the ground
  Note: Forearms remain shoulders' width apart, with fists facing down

At the same time:

* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint; let arms and fists stay in position and follow pelvis and body as they turn to Left Front Corner, as if bending a bow (Fig. 239)



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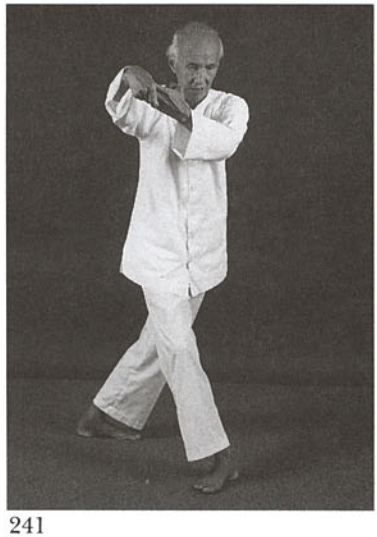
Note: Both feet point to Left
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Pelvis and body lean forward slightly, facing Left Front Corner
Forearms are parallel to the ground, with fists pointing to Left Front Corner

✳ Turn pelvis and body to Left by rotating right hip joint; let arms and fists stay in position and follow pelvis and body as they turn to Left, as if shooting a tiger (Fig. 240)

Note: Arms and legs remain in position

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body lean forward slightly, facing Left in a Bow-and-Arrow step
Feet point to Left
Right knee is bent; left leg is straight
Arms are bent, with forearms parallel to the ground, shoulders' width apart
Hands remain in fists, with palms facing down and pointing to Front
Eyes look to Left



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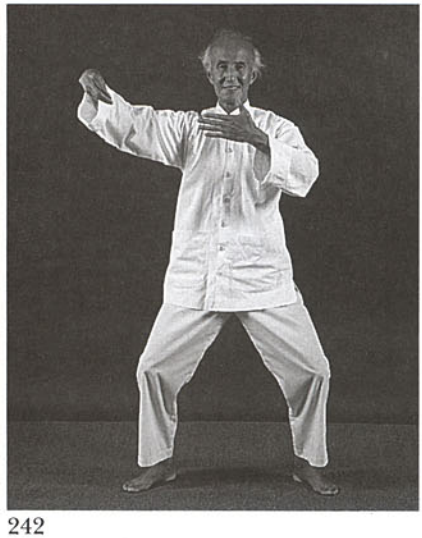

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POSTURE 36 : *Turn Body, Single Whip*

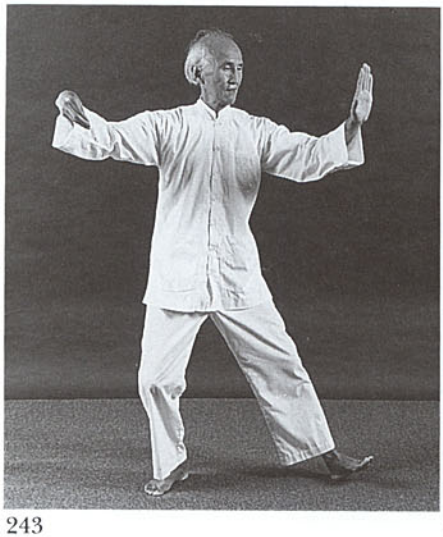
* Turn pelvis and body to Left Front Corner by rotating right hip joint and pivoting right foot on ball until it points to Front

  At the same time:
* Bring right hand in front of right shoulder until wrist is at shoulder level;
* Bring right fingers together and bend right wrist until fingers point to heart
* Bring left hand up until middle finger touches inside of right wrist (Fig. 241)

  First follow these steps individually, then perform them simultaneously.
* Turn pelvis and body to Front by rotating right hip joint; bring left foot to Front until heel is in line with right heel, slightly wider than hips' width apart, with toes pointing to Front

  Note: Right knee remains bent
  Left leg remains straight
* Shift weight to left leg until even by bending left knee (Fig. 242)

  At the same time:
* Lift left toes slightly and pivot left foot on heel until it points to Left Front Corner



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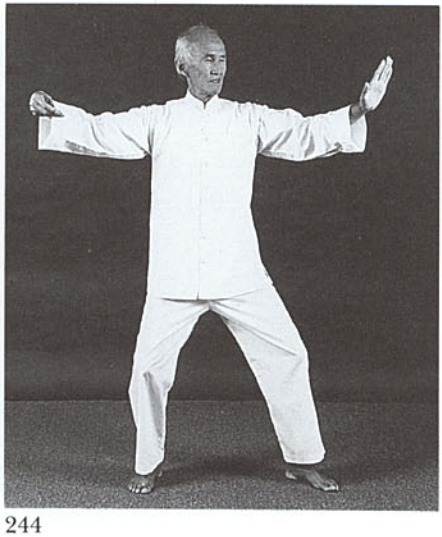

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At the same time:

* Move left hand horizontally in an arc from Right to Left until palm is in front of neck and thumb is even with nose
* Continue to move left hand toward Left; gradually turn left palm to face Left Front Corner near end of arc motion (Fig. 243)

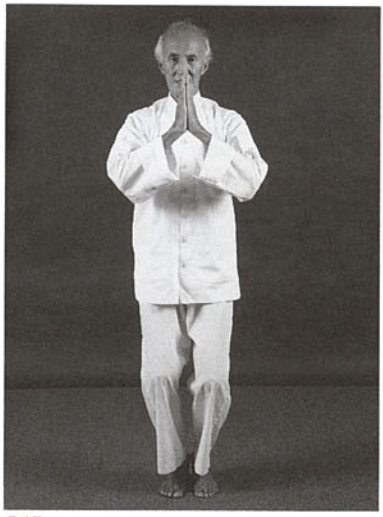
While doing this:

Left toes and left hand move together
Right knee is bent; left knee is straight
Weight is even on both feet
Eyes follow left hand

* Lower left toes, bend left knee, and shift weight until evenly distributed between both legs, with right knee staying in position (Fig. 244)

When the above is completed:

Pelvis and body are upright, facing Front
Knees are bent
Right toes point to Front
Left toes point to Left Front Corner
Arms are bent
Elbows are above knees
Wrists are at shoulder level
Fingers of right hand are together, pointing to heart
Palm of left hand faces Left Front Corner, with fingers pointing up



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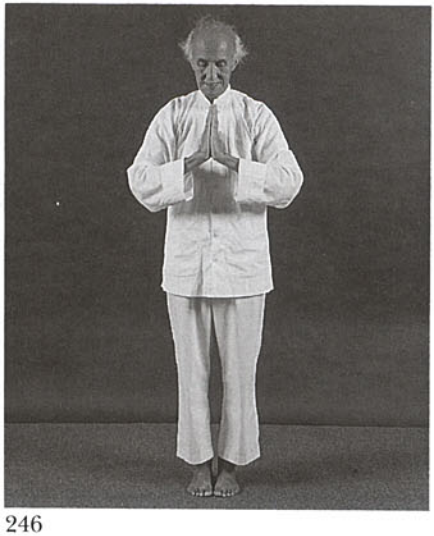

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Shoulders are sunk; elbows are dropped
Weight is even on both feet
Tailbone is dropped
Chi is sunk to *tan-tien*
Eyes watch left hand

INTEGRATION OF YIN AND YANG

* Shift weight to right foot by straightening left leg and bending right knee
* Bring left foot toward Right until it touches and is even with right foot

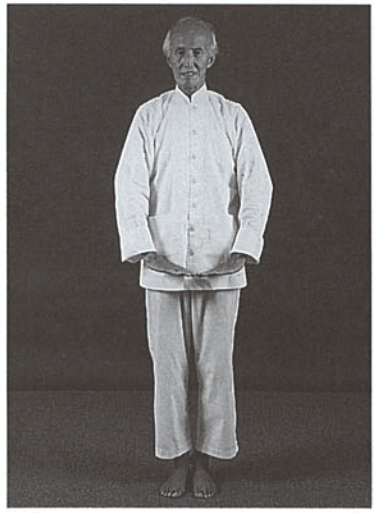
Note: Weight stays on right foot
Both legs are bent, with feet pointing to Front
Pelvis and body are upright

At the same time:

* Bring palms together in front of heart, with fingers pointing up (Fig. 245)

Note: Forearms are in a straight line, at a forty-five-degree angle to the ground
Hands do not touch body
Knees remain bent

* Gradually straighten both knees and shift weight until even between both legs (Fig. 246)



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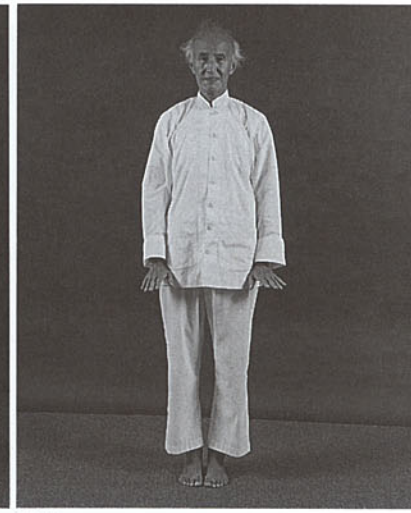


248

Note: Pelvis and body are upright
Shoulders are sunk
Eyes look straight ahead

At the same time:

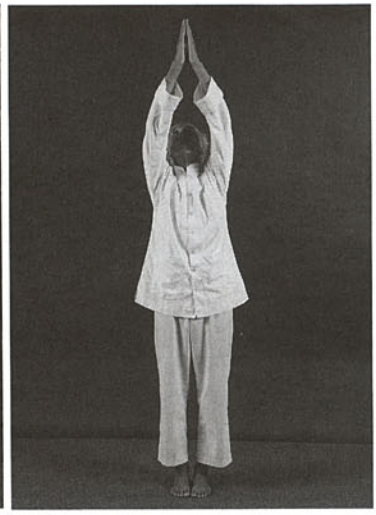
* Draw hands down slowly and vertically, until palms are in a straight line, parallel to the ground (Fig. 247)

Note: Middle fingers remain together
Palms face down
Hands do not touch body
Eyes look straight ahead

* Gradually bring palms to point to Front by rotating shoulder joints; let hands fall naturally at side of body (Fig. 248)

When the above is completed:
Pelvis and body remain upright, facing Front
Feet point to Front
Arms and hands fall naturally at sides
Shoulders are sunk
Head and neck are aligned with with body
Eyes look straight ahead
Now you may return to stillness and balance.

249



250

Closing

BOW WITH THANKSGIVING

Raise Arms and Hands

* Gradually raise arms and hands up sideways, until wrists are at shoulder level (Fig. 249)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
  Pelvis and body remain upright
  Arms move at shoulder joints
  Eyes look straight ahead
* Continue to raise arms and hands above head
  While doing this:
  Continue to inhale smoothly and naturally
  Note: Arms are straight, in a parallel line, and shoulders' width apart
  Eyes follow fingers as hands rise up
  Neck is gradually tilted back
* Gradually bring hands together overhead as though in prayer (Fig. 250)
  While doing this:
  Continue to inhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes watch fingertips

Draw Hands Down

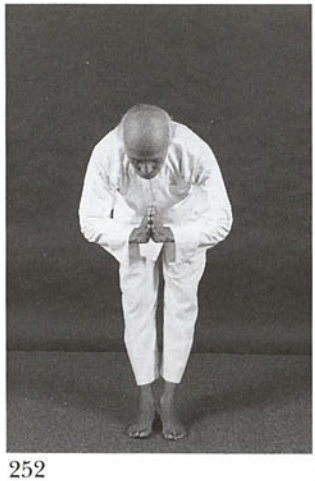
* Draw hands down slowly and vertically, past face toward heart (Fig. 251)
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally
  Eyes follow fingers as hands are drawn down, until eyes look straight ahead
  Palms remain together
  Forearms are in a straight line, parallel to the ground
  Arms do not touch body
* Inhale and exhale several times in a meditative mood
* Feel fullness, vitality, and a sense of satisfaction and contentment

Bow with Thanksgiving

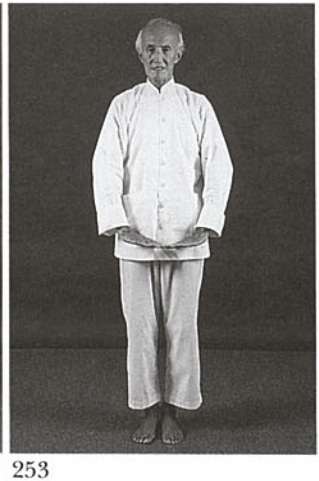
* Bend pelvis and body forward at hip joints until they are parallel to the ground (Fig. 252)
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally
  Note: Arms stay in position
  Legs remain straight
  Head and neck are aligned with body
* Gradually bring pelvis and body upright (Fig. 253)
  While doing this:
  Inhale smoothly and naturally
* Draw hands down slowly and vertically until palms are in a straight line, parallel to the ground
  While doing this:
  Exhale smoothly and naturally
  Note: Palms do not touch body
* Gradually bring palms to point to Front by rotating shoulder joints (Fig. 254)
  While doing this:
  Continue to exhale smoothly and naturally
  Note: Wrists remain bent
* Straighten both wrists and let arms and hands fall naturally at sides (Fig. 255)
  While doing this:
  Continue to exhale smoothly and naturally
  Note: Eyes look straight ahead

You have now returned to stillness and balance

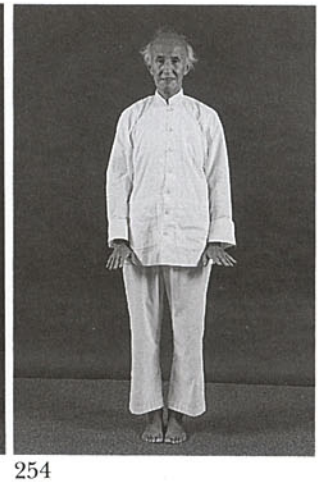
251



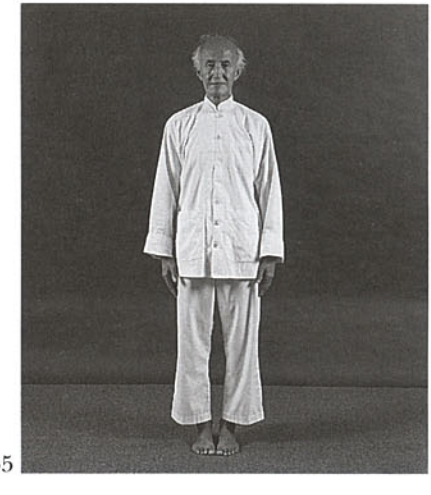
252



253



254



255

PART

IV

Eight Classic Works for Guiding Practice of Tai-Chi

The figure on the opposite page is the author's emblem, meaning "Love God, love people, love ourselves." In the center is the symbol of Tai-chi, which stands for the union of yin and yang. The outer ring represents people, or the "big self"; the small ring is the "small self," or the individual. The cross represents God. The vertical bar is a ladder to reach heaven, the horizontal bar depicts two arms embracing humanity. The four points of the cross represent the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of our personalities.

HERE I present my translations of eight works which make up part of the currently available body of classic writings on Tai-chi. The Chinese language, expressed in its written characters, tells the story of the moment. Translating these characters into literal English produces a number of short, simple sentences, but of course the simple is also profound. When one watches a Tai-chi master demonstrate the form, the observer's first thoughts are usually of the simple grace and beauty of the movements. However, the first attempt to follow along and imitate these movements reveals their true complexity. In the same way, the simple, poetic appearance of the classic works translated here masks their profound nature.

To truly learn Tai-chi, the student must have the verbal instruction of a competent master. These classic works contain the actual words of the excellent masters who were instrumental in the origination and development of Tai-chi over the more than three-hundred years of its existence. Thus, the classics provide the ultimate model or standard for all who wish to practice correctly. I have chosen to make my translation of these eight works on the theory and practice of Tai-chi as faithful as possible to the original Chinese, leaving the simple but profound words to speak for themselves. Where I felt there existed a need for more detailed explanation, I have added footnotes.

1. *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise*

by Wang Tsung-yu

Tai-chi comes from Wu-chi.
It is the mother of yin and yang.

In motion,
yin and yang differentiate.
In stillness,
they integrate.

No excess,
no insufficiency.
Follow after bending,
adhere to stretching.

Flexibly retreating
from a firm advance is evasion.
Coherently sticking
on a slight withdrawal is adherence.

Respond quickly to quick action.
Follow slowly toward slow motion.

Variations are numerous;
principles remain constant.

Through complete mastering
of all postures
comes the stage of gradually
awakening the awareness of *jing*.

Through gradually realizing
the awareness of *jing*
comes the stage of
intuitive enlightenment.

Without a long period
of arduous and persistent effort,
one can never suddenly see the light.

To lift the spirit up to the crown,
sink the *chi* down to the *tan-tien*. [1]

[1] Located in the internal center of the pelvis, four fingers below the navel

No leaning, no inclining. [2]
Suddenly appearing, suddenly disappearing. [3]

When heaviness is felt on the left,
the left becomes vacant.
When pressure is brought on the right,
the right becomes void.

Countering a force rising upward,
you become higher.

Confronting a force sinking downward,
you become lower.

The more your opponent advances,
the more he feels the distance to be incredibly long.

The more your adversary retreats,
the more he feels the distance to be desperately short.

Your body is so sensitive
that a feather cannot be added without being felt,
and so pliable
that a fly cannot alight without affecting balance.

Your combatant cannot perceive your intention,
but you can always predict his.

Becoming a peerless hero
results from mastering these.

In the field of martial art
there are many heterodox schools.
Although they differ in form,
they can never go beyond reliance upon
the strong overcoming the weak,
the fast overtaking the slow.

The strong defeating the weak,
the slow being defeated by the fast;
this is due to innate physical endowment,
and has nothing to do with hard study
and patient practice.

Examining the old saying,
Four ounces deflect a thousand pounds;
it clearly shows this cannot be achieved by sheer force.

[2] Constantly maintain the central equilibrium
[3] Unceasingly adjust the yin and yang

Watching an old person defeating a group of people,
how can this be executed due to swiftness?

Stand still like a balanced scale;
move enlivenedly like a whirling wheel.

By sinking your weight on one side,
you can move freely, at will.
By distributing your weight on both feet,
you become double-weighted and stagnant.

One can frequently see many
who have spent years of painstaking practice;
they are still unable to neutralize an attacking force,
and are always controlled by opponents.

This is simply because
they still have not fully comprehended
the fault of double-weightedness.

To avoid this problem
you must distinguish yin from yang.

To adhere is to withdraw;
to withdraw is to adhere.
Yang does not leave yin;
yin does not leave yang.

Yin and yang
should be mutually complemented.

After you are able
to mutually complement yin and yang,
then you are able
to comprehend the *jing*. [4]

After you are able
to completely comprehend the *jing*,
the more you practice,
the better your skill will be.

Watching and understanding in silence,
practicing and experiencing in feeling,
gradually you will reach a level
where you may act at will.

Basically, you should let go of yourself,

[4] Intrinsic strength

and be absorbed completely
in responding to your opponent.

Most people misunderstand this;
they give up what is within reach
and seek something unreachable.

This is what is said:

The slightest deviation
will take you a thousand miles
away from the right way.

In the study of this art,
students should not overlook
distinguishing truth from falsehood.

For this reason,
this treatise is made.

* * *

2. *The Thirteen Positions (Long Chuan)*

by Wang Tsung-yu

Long chuan is like the Yangtze River and the great seas,
flowing and rolling on and on, never ending.

The Thirteen Positions are:

Ward off, roll back, press, and push;
pull, split, elbow strike, and shoulder force.

Together with
step forward, step backward, look left, look right, and center.[1]

Ward off, roll back, press, and push
are north, south, east, and west; the four cardinal directions.

[1] Central equilibrium

Pull, split, elbow strike, and shoulder force
are northwest, southwest, northeast, southeast;
the four diagonal corners.

These are the Eight Trigrams.

Step forward, step backward, look left, look right, and center
are metal, wood, water, fire, and earth.

These are the Five Stages of Change.

Put them together,
this is called The Thirteen Positions.

In the West, this title has usually been translated as *The Thirteen Postures.* Translating it in this manner has led people to believe that Tai-chi originally consisted of only thirteen postures. Because Chinese characters can have more than one meaning depending on context, it is understandable that such misconceptions might arise. In *The Thirteen Positions,* Wang explains that Tai-chi is based on the Eight Trigrams and the Five Elements, all of which are defined in the *I Ching.* These thirteen positions represent the essential or basic positions of Tai-chi. All the postures of any given form are variations or manifestations of the thirteen basic, or essential positions.

* * *

3. *Chant of Tai-chi Chuan Push Hands*

by an unknown master
revised by Wang Tsung-yu

Ward off, roll back,
press, and push
should be practiced seriously,
with conscience.

Upper body and lower body
should coordinate in unison;
then, your opponent
will find it difficult to invade.

Let him come
to attack with tremendous force.
Exert four ounces
to deflect a thousand pounds.

Entice him to advance
and fall empty;
then, simultaneously
close and release.[1]

Adhering, linking,
sticking, following;
never resist
or disconnect.[2]

[1] It might be understood as: continue adhering and yielding, and seek the right moment to discharge your *jing*
[2] The last two stanzas of this chant were added by Wang Tsung-yu

* * *

4. *Chant of The Thirteen Positions*

by an unknown master

The postures of the Thirteen General Positions
should never be scorned.
The source of intention
is in the waist.[1]

Alternations of
the insubstantial and the substantial
should be considered
with close attention.

[1] The waist here, in Chinese, is *yao-hsi. Yao* is waist, *hsi* is crack.

The vitality of the *chi*
should be extended
all over the body,
without hindrance.

With tranquility,
meet your opponent's movements;
in calmness,
operate your own.

Then, the mystery of the art
will be manifested
when you interact
with your opponent's changes.

Keep a watchful mind
on every posture,
and seek
the hidden purpose.

You will master the art
without noticing
the time
and effort spent.

Take heed of the waist[2]
at every moment.
Completely relax the abdomen
and let the *chi* seethe.

Plumb the coccyx erectly;
the spirit will ascend to the crown.
Hold the head suspended;
the body will become agile and light.

Examine carefully
and thoroughly;
find out the function
of each posture.

Movements of
bending-stretching
and opening-closing
will evolve naturally and freely.

[2] The waist here, in Chinese, is *yao-jian*. *Yao* is waist, *jian* is the space in between.

To enter the gate
and be led the right way,
verbal instruction from a competent master
is always a necessity.

To obtain skill
and reach a high level,
unceasing and diligent self-practice
is also essential.

With regard to the body's reality
and its function,
what should be
the proper standard?

Yi and *chi*
are the king to command;
muscles and bones,
the officials to follow.

Ponder carefully:
What final aim
should be kept
in mind?

Rejuvenation
and prolongation,
making your life
an eternal spring!

Although this song contains only
140 Chinese characters,
every character is true and distinct, without omission.

If you do not follow
the indications stated above,
you will sigh with regret,
as your time and effort are spent in vain.

* * *

5. *Essentials of Joint Hands*

by Wu Yu-hsiang

This piece of work appears in the Old Three Copies of the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise,* which was hand-copied by Wu Yu-hsiang's nephew, Li Yi-yu. This is the original, complete form of Wu's most important work. It might be the first time it has been published in English. Even in China, most people do not know this work, because most books of Tai-chi introduce a compilation of this form. It seems someone compiled it into a simplified form under the title of *Exposition of Insight into the Practice of the Postures of the Thirteen Positions,* and took the last part of this piece to make Chang San-feng's so-called *Tai-chi Chuan Classic.*

The interpretation says:

Use the mind to move the *chi,*
and make it sink calmly and steadily;
then the *chi* will penetrate the bone.

This is known:
the source of intention
is in the waist. *

The *yi* and the *chi*
should be interchanged in an agile way,
then there will be roundness
and liveliness in movement.

This is known:
Alternation of
the insubstantial and the substantial
should be considered
with close attention. *

When poising the body,
it must be perfectly erect
and remain balanced and pliable,
responding to the Eight Directions.

Direct the *chi*

* All these quotations are from the *Chant of The Thirteen Positions.*

as if it were threading a pearl
with a path of nine turns,
so that there would be no tiny part of the body
it could not reach.

This is known:
Vitality of the *chi*
should be extended
all over the body
without hindrance. *

When releasing the *jing,*
one must be totally relaxed
and remain calm and steady,
focusing on one aim.

This is known:
With tranquility,
meet the opponent's movements.
In calmness,
operate your own. *

Turning back and forth,
there must be folds and alternations;
advancing and retreating,
there must be rotation and variation.

This is known:
When you interact
with the opponent's changes,
the mystery of the art
will be manifested. *

Seek the straightness
from the curved.
Reserve
before releasing.

This is known:
Keep a watchful mind on every posture,
and seek the hidden purpose.
Take heed of the waist
at every moment. *

The spirit should be able
to be lifted,
then there will be no lagging
and heaviness in movement.

This is known:
Completely relax the abdomen
and let the *chi* seethe. *

Lift the *jing* up to the crown
with unforced spirit.
Sink the *chi*
down to the *tan-tien.*
Do not lean forward
or incline backward.

This is known:
Plumb the coccyx erectly,
the spirit will ascend to the crown.
Hold the head suspended,
the body will become agile and light. *

Use the *chi* to drive the body
and make it move smoothly and fluently;
then the body will follow the mind.

This is known:
Movements of
bending-stretching
and opening-closing
will evolve naturally and freely. *

The mind is the commander;
the *chi,* the flag.
The *shen*[1] is the governor;
the body, the official.

This is known:
Yi and *chi*
are the king to command;
muscles and bones,
the officials to follow. *

The interpretation says:

The body is involved in movement;
the mind is precious and calm.
The *chi* should be converged;
the *shen* must be relaxed.

The mind is the commander;

[1] The internal spirit

the *chi,* the flag.
The *shen* is the governor;
the body, the official.

Pay attention to every motion;
then, you can constantly obtain the benefits.

First concentrate upon the mind;
then the body.

'Concentrate upon the body'
does not mean focusing on the movements
of hands and feet.

This is known:
Form a coherent whole
without interruption.
Yield to oneself
and adhere to the opponent.

Attract the opponent to intrude
and fall empty.
Use four ounces
to deflect a thousand pounds.

Keep in mind:
One part of the body acts,
all parts act.
One part of the body stands still,
all parts are still.

While acting,
there is still stillness.
In stillness,
there is still acting.

Internally,
consolidate the spirit.
Externally,
exhibit calmness and peace.

One must be able to pursue the opponent,
not follow oneself.

Pursuing others is agile;
following the self is clumsy.

Hold and uplift the *chi,*
and you will be powerless.

Cultivate and accumulate it,
and you will be like pure steel.

If the opponent does not move,
you should not move.
At his slightest movement,
you should move earlier than he.

Yielding to follow others,
one must know oneself;
then one will be in the position of
moving along with turning and connection.

Voiding yourself to adhere to others,
you must know the opponent;
then you will be at the moment
not too early and not too late.

The spirit should be able
to be lifted;
then there will be no lagging
and heaviness in movement.

Adhering and yielding
should occur agilely,
in accordance with the opponent;
then you can see the mystery of falling empty .

Turning back and forth,
there must be a differentiation of yin and yang.
Advancing and retreating,
there must be containment of turning and closing.

Ji[2] initiates from the self.
Li[3] borrows from opponents.

When discharging the *jing*,
the upper body and lower body
should coordinate in unison;
then you are able to go forward
without hindrance.

When poising the body,
one must be perfectly erect,
without leaning and inclining;

[2] Proper timing

[3] Force or strength

then one is able to
respond to the Eight Directions.

In motionlessness,
be as still as a mountain.
In motion,
be as fluid as a river.

Take steps
like you are stepping upon the edge of an abyss.
Mobilize the *jing*
like pulling silk from a cocoon.

Restore the *jing*
as if drawing a bow.
Release
as if discharging an arrow.

Direct the *chi*
as if it were threading a pearl
with a path of nine turns,
so there would be no tiny part of the body
it could not reach.

Mobilize the *jing*
as if refining steel
a hundred times over,
so that there would be nothing from your opponent
too hard to penetrate.

The appearance
is as a falcon about to seize a rabbit.
The *shen*
is as a cat about to catch a rat.

Seek the straightness
from the curved.
Reserve
before releasing.

To yield
is to release.
To connect
is to remain unbroken.

When able to be extremely soft and pliable,
one can be extremely firm and hard.

When able to adhere and follow,
one can be nimble and enlivened.

Chi must be continuously nourished
day by day,
then it can be accumulated
without ill effect.

Jing must be conserved
in a curved way,
then there will be restoration
without exhaustion.

Gradually, one will be able
to cope with a complicated situation with ease,
and also be able to comprehend.
Doing nothing,
one is able to achieve everything.

It is said again:

First, concentrate upon the mind,
then the body.
Relax the abdomen,
enable the *chi* to penetrate into the bone.

Keep the *shen* tranquil
and the body calm.
At every moment,
pay attention to the mind.

Remember:
one part of the body acts,
all parts act.
One part of the body stands still,
all parts are still.

In motion,
let the *chi* adhere
to the back
and gather in the spine.

Be still!

Internally,
consolidate the spirit.
Externally,
exhibit calmness and peace.

Take steps
like a cat walking.
Mobilize *jing*
like pulling silk
from a cocoon.

Of the whole body,
full attention should be centered
on restoring the *shen,*
not upon the *chi.*

Focusing on the *chi*
leads to stagnancy;
thus the striking force
will be ineffective.

Only ignore it;
then the striking force
will be as strong
as pure steel.

Chi
resembles the wheel;
the lumbar,
the axle.

It is said again:

If the opponent does not move,
you should not move.
At his slightest move,
you should move earlier than he.

The *jing* should seem relaxed,
but not collapsed;
about to launch,
but not launched.

Even if it seems broken off,
the consciousness of the *yi*
is not broken.

It is said again:[4]

[4] The last part of this piece was used to compose Chang San-feng's *Tai-chi Chuan Classic.* The first three sentences were deleted and replaced by modified text shown at the end of this piece.

In every motion,
only the hands
first manifest the *li,*
then immediately relax and loosen.

Particularly, the motion should pass through
and link together;
nothing more than the process of
starting, continuous turning, and closing.

First the *yi* moves;
then the *jing* moves.
The turning and connecting
should be continuous like a thread.

The *chi* should be actively stimulated.
The *shen* should be internally centered.

Let no part show any deficiency,
appear concave or convex,
or be discontinuous.

The root is in the feet,
sprouted through the legs,
governed at the waist,
and manifested in the fingers.

From the feet,
to the legs,
up to the waist;
all should be coordinated harmoniously
as an integrated whole.

Then, advancing or retreating,
you will always be in an advantageous situation.

If you fail to grasp the advantage
of proper timing and proper positioning,
the body will show bewilderment and disharmony,
and the result will inevitably lead to off-centeredness.

This defect must be corrected
by seeking the fault in the waist and legs.

Upward or downward,
forward or backward,
left or right;
all follow this principle.

These are all motivated consciously
by the *yi,*
not by concentrating
on the external.

If there is upward, there is downward;
if there is forward, there is backward;
if there is left, there is right.

When the *yi*
intends to move upward,
it must be initiated
with a downward idea.

When an object
seems to start to move upward,
one must frustrate
its intention beforehand.

Then its root
will be uprooted naturally,
and the object will collapse immediately,
without a doubt.

Insubstantiality and substantiality
should be clearly distinguished.

Any single part of the body
has its insubstantial and substantial aspects.
The body as a whole also
has its insubstantial and substantial aspects.

All parts of the body should be linked together
through every joint, without the slightest break.

[The three stanzas deleted from the original form of *Essentials of Joint Hands* say:]

In every motion,
only the hands
first manifest the *li,*
then, they immediately relax and loosen.

Particularly, the motion should pass through
and link together;
nothing more than the process of
starting, continuing, turning, and closing.

First the *yi* moves,
then the *jing* moves.
The turning and connecting
should be continuous, like a thread.

[In comparison to the so-called *Tai-chi Chuan Classic* by Chang San-feng, which begins with:]

In every motion
the whole body must be light and nimble.

Particularly,
the motions should pass through and link together.

[One can see that the three sentences were modified considerably; much meaning was lost in the process.]

* * *

6. *A Discourse on How to Practice Tai-chi Chuan*

by Yang Cheng-fu

Although there are numerous schools of Chinese martial arts, it should be known that all kinds of skills contain philosophical theories. In the long course of Chinese history, there are many who have spent all of their time and energy on the martial arts, yet they still can not completely break through the mysteries. However, if one can spend a day's time to learn, he can get a day's worth of achievement. Achievement is accumulated day after day, month after month. When conditions are ripe, success will come, just as where water flows, a channel is formed.

Tai-chi is an art that contains hardness within softness. It is like keeping a needle in a ball of cotton. There are philosophical theories in its technological, physical, and mechanical aspects. Those who are interested in this art should go through a certain process, giving themselves plenty of time. The guidance of a competent teacher and the help of close friends should not be neglected, but

practicing by yourself every day is the most important thing. Otherwise, talking about it all day long and waiting year after year, once there is contact with an opponent, one feels empty and uninitiated. The ancient says, "Merely longing and thinking without learning and practicing will reap no benefits." If one can practice persistently, while the mind moves from morning to evening, through summer and winter; regardless of whether he is old or young, male or female, the success will be the same.

From north to south, the number of people who are interested in studying Tai-chi has been increasing daily. Among these people, there are many who are concentrating faithfully and practicing hard. They have the potential for a bright future. But, generally speaking, there are two types of people involved in Tai-chi. One group includes those who are talented and young, quick to comprehend and understand. Unfortunately, they are satisfied with just a little achievement, and stop learning in the middle of the journey. Thus they cannot obtain any great achievements. The other group is comprised of those who expect instant results. Within a year they learn fist, sword, sabre, and spear. They can copy the movements mechanically, yet in reality they have not mastered the essence of the art. Examining their movements; above and below, left and right; all are off track. If their movements are to be corrected, every posture should be revised. The worst thing is that even if the posture is corrected in the morning, it might be easily forgotten in the evening. Thus we frequently hear that it's easy to learn a martial art, but difficult to correct the posture. Where did this saying come from? It is a result of speeding up the learning process. These people incorrectly transmit their erroneous methods of learning to other people, harming themselves and others. This is a source of great worry to those who are serious about martial arts.

To learn Tai-chi, you must first practice the framework or posture. Follow the sequence of the postures on the score one after the other, instructed by the teacher. The student of Tai-chi should pay full attention and be patient in order to fathom and remember the instructions quietly, following and imitating the postures wholeheartedly. During this period, the student should give the utmost attention to the following four aspects: the internal, the external, the above, and the below. The internal is to use

mind and not strength. The external is to make the whole body light and nimble, to link all the joints together from the feet to the legs and the waist, and to sink the shoulders and bend the elbows. The above is to lift the *jing* to the crown with unforced spirit. The below is to sink the *chi* to the *tan-tien*. For the novice, these several sentences should be pondered day and night until their true meaning is understood and the correctness of every posture is ascertained. After he has truly mastered one posture, then the following one may be studied, until gradually the whole sequence is learned. In this way, the postures will not need to be corrected. Even after a long period of time, the postures will not be out of shape.

When practicing, the joints of the whole body should be loose, open, and natural. First, from the mouth to the abdomen, the *chi* should not be blocked. Second, from the waist to the legs and the limbs, awkward force should not be used. These two sentences can be recited by all the internal martial artists, but when they are moving, turning, kicking, or bending, their breath might be puffing and blowing, and their body might be swaying and shaking. These problems are caused by blocking the *chi* and using awkward force or strength.

Guidelines:

1. When imitating and practicing the postures, the head should not be tilted. This is why you are told to suspend the head from above, as if there is something on the head to be lifted, but the head still should not be held stiffly upright. This is what is meant by suspension. The eyes should look straight forward, but sometimes they should follow the body's movements or turns. Although the line of vision seems like nothing, it is still one of the most important movements during the changing of postures. It is supplemental to the movement of the body and the hands. The mouth is open but not really open, closed but not really closed. Exhale with the mouth, inhale with the nose, and follow the natural rhythm. When saliva is secreted underneath the tongue, swallow it, don't spit.

2. The body should be upright, neither leaning forward nor inclining backward. The spine and the tailbone should be vertically upright. When changing postures, opening, and closing, the movements should be performed while containing the chest, stretching the back, sinking the

shoulders, and turning the waist. At the very beginning, the learner should pay full attention to these points. Otherwise, it will be difficult to correct errors later on. The result of this will be sluggishness of movement. Although one may be deeply involved in Kung-fu, it is still difficult to apply it practically.

3. The joints of the two arms should be loose and open. The shoulders should drop downward, and the elbows should bend downward, too. The palms should be slightly stretched, the fingers lightly curled. Use the *yi* to move the arms and allow the *chi* to penetrate through the fingers. Accumulating over a long period of time, the internal *jing* will permeate the whole body, and the mystery of this art will sprout forth naturally.

4. The two feet should alternate between insubstantial and substantial; taking steps should be like a cat walking. When weight is shifted to the left, the left foot is substantial, and the right foot is insubstantial. Likewise, when weight is shifted to the right, the right is substantial, and the left foot is insubstantial. What does insubstantial mean? It means not empty. Its momentum is not broken, yet there still remains the potential of changing, stretching, or contracting. What does substantial mean? It means nothing more than reliable and solid.You should neither exert too much *jing,* nor release too vigorous *li.* Thus, when bending the leg, it should not move past its vertical position. Beyond that, it is exerting too much *jing.* This will cause the body to fall forward and be off-center.

5. The soles of the feet should be distinguished between kicking with the leg (in the score, it is written Left, Right Separate Foot or Left, Right Wing Foot) and kicking with the foot. When kicking with the leg, the focus is on the toes. When kicking with the foot, the focus is on the entire sole. Wherever the *yi* goes, the *chi* goes; wherever the *chi* goes, the *jing* goes, too. The joints of the leg should be loose and open, and the kicking should be even and stable. At this moment, it is too easy to exert vigorous *jing.* This will cause the body to become swinging and unstable, and the kicking will lose its power.

The process of learning Tai-chi: first practice the framework and the posture (bare hands without weapons), for instance Tai-chi Chuan and Tai-chi Long Chuan. Then, practice Single-Handed Push and Pull, Fixed-Step Push

Hands, Active-Step Push Hands, Da-lu[1] and San-shou.[2] After this, practice the weapons, for example Tai-chi sword, Tai-chi sabre, and Tai-chi spear (The Thirteen Spearings).

The time to practice: two times after getting out of bed. If there is no time in the morning, then two times before going to bed. In total you should practice seven to eight times daily. If not, at least once in the morning and once in the evening. Never practice after drinking or overeating.

The place: it is nice to practice in a yard or hallway where fresh air circulates freely and there is sunshine. Avoid places where there is straight strong wind or dampness and mold. While practicing, breathing becomes long and deep. If strong wind and a moldy odor enter the body, they harm the lungs and will invite disease. It is appropriate to wear loose, short garments with square-headed, cotton-soled shoes. After practicing, if sweating, never take off the clothing and remain naked or wipe the body with cold water. In doing this, one may bring on illness.

* * *

7. *Six Key Elements of Practicing Tai-chi Chuan*

by Wu Chien-chuan

The distinguishing feature of Tai-chi Chuan
is a dual cultivation of body and mind.

Therefore, its method of practice
is different from other kinds of martial arts.

Emphasis should be on the preparation of both
physical and spiritual aspects.

[1] Literally translated as the "Great Rolling-Back," which means to use the Eight Trigrams of Tai-chi (ward-off, roll-back, push, and press; pull, split, elbow strike, and shoulder force) to move within the Four Corners and the Eight Directions.

[2] Free-hand Push Hands

The physical aspects are as follows:

1. Uplift the *Jing* to the Crown with Unforced Spirit:

   Uplifting the *jing*
   is holding the head straight and upright,
   sensing the *jing* as it penetrates to the crown.

   The head is the center of operation of the whole body.
   Only when the head is straight and upright
   can one's spirit be stirred.

   But, when the head is held straight and upright,
   it should be held with unforced spirit.
   (This means do not use *li*.)
   Doing this,
   it is correct.

   This is what the *Chant of the Thirteen Positions*
   points out:

   Hold the head suspended,
   the body will become agile and light.

2. Keep the Chest In and Stretch the Back

   To keep the chest in
   is to make the chest slightly concave,
   allowing the diaphragm to lower.
   This helps the *chi* sink to the *tan-tien*.

   To stretch the back
   is to make the back slightly convex,
   enabling the spine to be vertically straight.
   Therefore, *li* can be delivered from the spine.

3. Relax the Waist and Lower the Buttocks

   To relax the waist
   is to make it light and loose.

   All the turning and moving of Tai-chi Chuan
   is related to the waist.

   That is why it is said that
   the source of intention is in the waist.

   When the waist is relaxed and opened up,

it not only allows the *chi* to easily sink downward
and make the turning and moving swift and agile,

It also makes the lower part
become stronger and more solid.
Avoid the defect of being heavy on the upper part
and light at the lower part.

To lower the buttocks
is to make them sink on plumb,
not leaning to the outside.

Be attentive
when lowering the buttocks,
so that it won't obstruct the lightening
and loosening of the waist.

4. Sink the Shoulders and Drop the Elbows

If the shoulders are not sunk,
then the body from the chest up is restrained,
and the *chi* will flow upward.

If the elbows are not dropped,
strength cannot be magnified,
and both sides of the chest will lose their protection.

The above four items all emphasize
the natural postures of the physique,
avoiding any unnatural attitude,
making the entire body relaxed and loose.
Then the body can be light,
agile, and changeable,
rounding and turning at will.

The Spiritual Aspects:

Concerning the preparation of spiritual aspects,
there are the following items:

5. Purely Using *Yi* Function

The first thing to be avoided
as taboo in Tai-chi
is to apply *li*.

All the movements
should be poured forth with the *yi*.

Just as the Taoist meditation masters[1]
use *yi* to move the *chi.*

For instance,
in moving the hands up,
they are not automatically moved up
without consciousness.
It is the *yi*
which moves them up.

While the *yi* is not stopping,
the movement will not stop.
At the moment the *yi* stops,
the movement instantly stops.

After a long period of practice,
one can naturally cultivate the imaginative *li.*

As the *Tai-chi Chuan Treatise* says:
use your mind to control your *chi;*
use your *chi* to direct your body.

This is an excellent application
of using conscious mind to control the body.

If beginners can comprehend
the truth of this theory
and understand that they should avoid
the vain attempt of applying *li,*
then they can gradually get away from prosaic
and mechanical practice
and enter the most enjoyable and pleasing stage.
They will never get tired of learning and practicing.

6. The Unity of Form and Spirit

The ultimate objective of practicing Tai-chi Chuan
is to cultivate one's *shen.*

For this reason,
while practicing the form,
one must be able to lift up his spirit,
and to unify his spirit with the movement
in oneness.

Only thus can one's sensitivity be keen,
and his movements agile and light.

[1] Masters of Do-ying

8. *Summary Ballad of the First Classic*

by Chen Wang-ting

This ballad is a summary of the theory of Tai-chi written by the originator of Tai-chi, Grand Master Chen Wang-ting.

Vertical discharge
and bending stretch
people know not;

All depend on
the twining and binding
that I rely on.

Chopping strike
and pushing press
should go forward;

Throwing out
and horizontal pull
are also hard to oppose.

Hook and ward-off,
force and grasp,
everybody knows;

Dodge and shock
and use cunning —
who comprehends?

Feign defeat,
pretend withdrawal,
who says it is lost;

Lure
and charge back;
reclaim the victory.

Rolling tie
and contacting sweep
are delicately effective;

Split and chop,
sideways and straight,
are surprisingly strange.

Block the advance,
hide the intercept:
piercing-heart elbow;

Face the wind
join the step:
red-cannon fist.[1]

Twice changing,
sweep-press,
kick up to the face;

Left and right
side-kicking
with the heels of the feet.

Block in the front,
hold in the back
like the lock without leak;

Make a feint to the east
and attack to the west
should be well understood.

Envelope from above
and lift from below
should be remembered;

Intruding attack
and dodging retreat
should not be late.

Hiding the head
and covering the face
are common under the heaven;

It is rare
to thrust the heart
and chop the ribs.

If instructors
don't understand
these theories

It is difficult
for them
to evaluate this art.

[1] The term "red cannon" signifies fire

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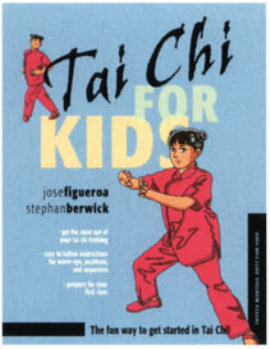

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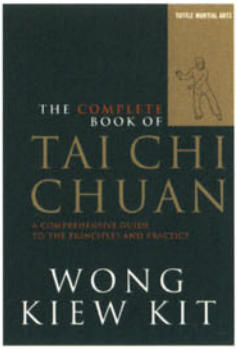

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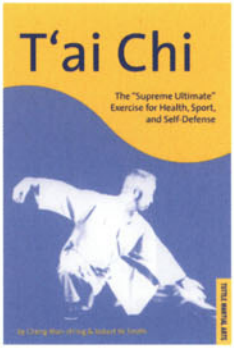

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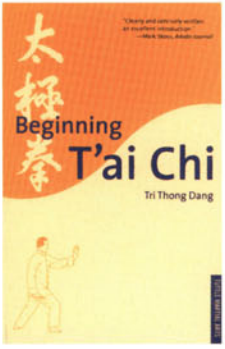

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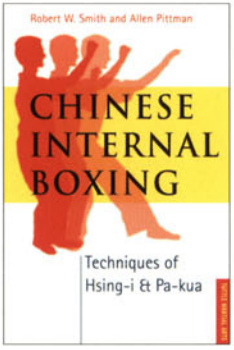

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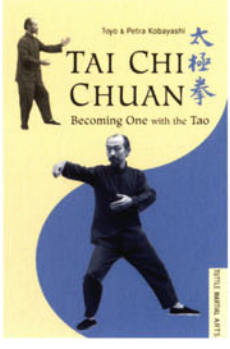

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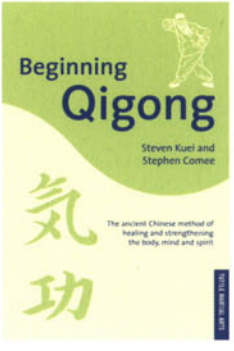

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